26

JUNE 1988

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

Americans on perestroika

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The socialism we renounce and the socialism we want

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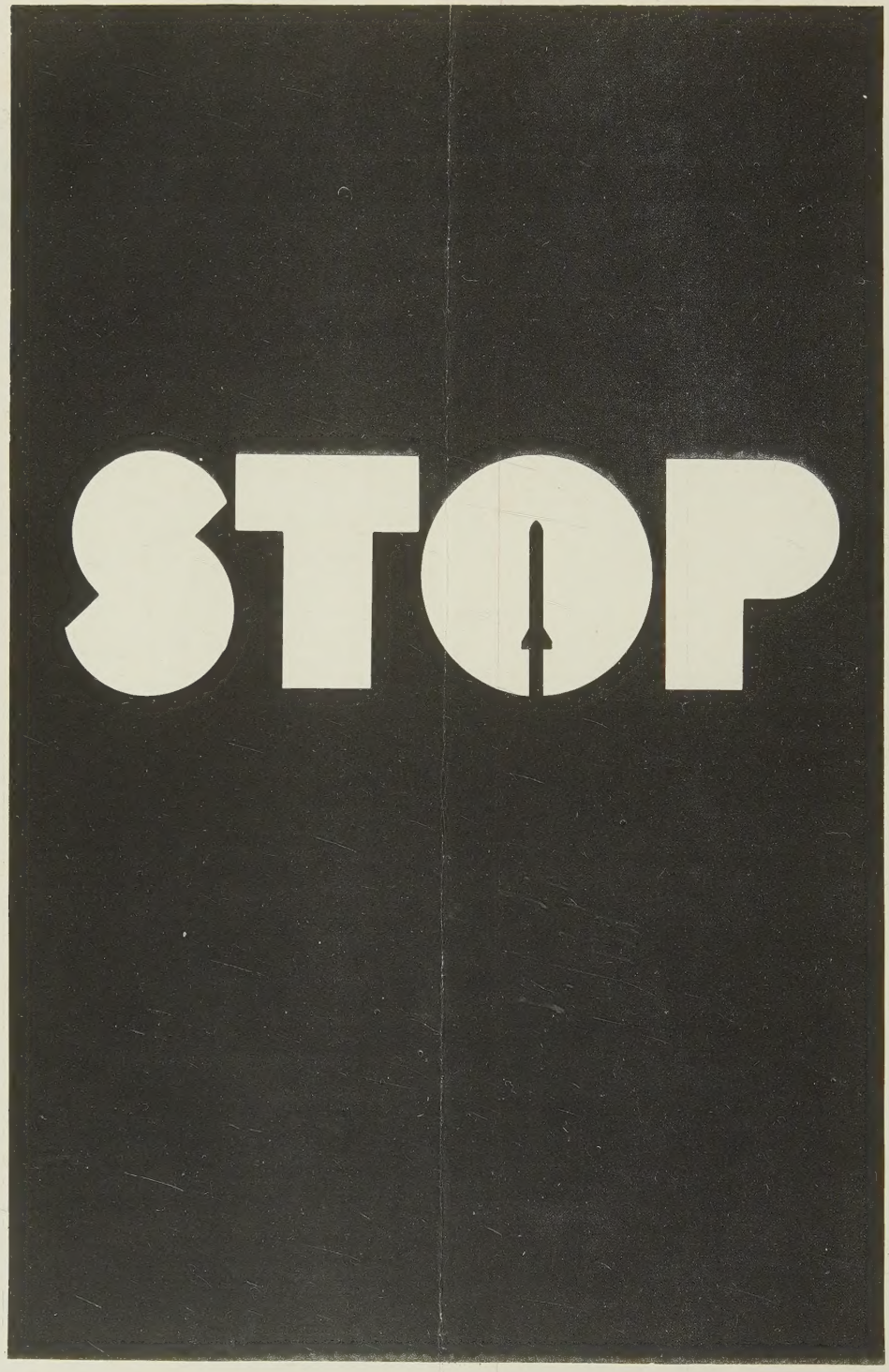
NEW PERSPECTIVES



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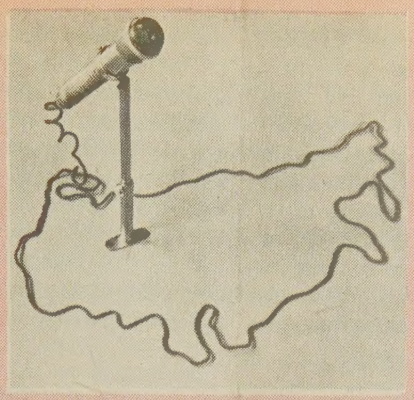

THE SOCIALISM WE RENOUNCE AND THE SOCIALISM WE WANT

Discussing the Central Committee Theses for the 19th Party conference. Contributions by Mikhail Nenashev, Dmitry Volkogonov, Vyacheslav Dashichev, Evgeny Ambartsumov, Gherman Diligensky, Vladimir Lakshin, Andrei Nuikin, Alexander Bovin, Vladimir Kudryavtsev and Anatoly Butenko.
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Cover by Igor Rogachevsky

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TOWARDS THE PARTY CONFERENCE

Sergei Parshukov,
war veteran
and veteran worker,
Sverdlovsk, U.S.S.R.

■ Many negative phenomena are rooted primarily in the neglect of people's control. Today it does not go to the heart of abuses and is subject to parochial influences. Subordinate as it is to local officials who cover up each other's shady dealings, people's control is forced solely to serve them alone. That is why it is now a burden on the state, doing more harm than good.

Few officials tolerate people who begin to wash their dirty linen in public, thereby questioning their infallability. I do not write this as a mere onlooker. Between 1948 and 1951 I worked as an inspector with the Ministry of State Control for the Tyumen Region. In those years state control was independent of local Party and government bodies. I am sure that the establishment of the People's Control Committee in 1965 (on Brezhnev's initiative and subordinate to government bodies) provided fertile soil for the appearance of the Rashidovs, Kunayevs, Shchelokovs and others of that ilk bespangled with gold star medals.

I think the Party Conference should discuss ways of reorganizing the People's Control Committee so that its inspectors are completely independent of local Party and government bodies.

OPINIONS

Richard Hough-Ross,
executive director
of the U.S. – U.S.S.R.
Bridges for Peace,
Norwich, U.S.A.

■ For the past five years I have worked with the U.S. – U.S.S.R. Bridges for Peace, organizing citizens' exchanges, including several trips by American and Russian clergymen to both countries. Recently I was a guest at the celebrations devoted to the Millennium of Christianity in Russia.

It was an impressive occasion. Every day something occurred that was unprecedented, for instance, a concert of religious music in the Bolshoi Theatre and the laying of the foundation stone for a new church within the limits of Moscow.

Observing all this, I was moved with joy for the sake of my friends in the Soviet Union, for the Soviet people as a whole, because you have boldly recognized that there is something in the Russian Orthodox traditions that must be revived. I am sure that all the positive features of the Church must be used in moving towards the goals set by perestroika.

It seems to me that two mutually connected messages have become apparent in the course of perestroika: to work for the good of society (which is also a message of the Church) and to restore the original concept of socialism, which was distorted in the years of the personality cult and stagnation.

In other words, you are working for the renewal of society and the restoration of common sense. I think the Church can help you in achieving the first goal. I have heard that the Church will now be able to run hospitals and homes for the aged, that is, to do things it has traditionally done with success. This will find support, I think, because there are people eager to give help to those who need it.

FROM THE EDITORS:
A delegation of West German peace campaigners, consisting of Catholic and Protestant Church dignitaries, paid a visit to the Soviet Union early in May. They also visited the New Times office. Recently we received a letter from a member of the group.

Christopher Zörner,
member of
the group
Political Pilgrims,
Frankfurt-am-Main,
F.R.G.

■ I recall May 7, the day when we left for the Soviet Union. The distance covered during our two hours of flight seemed considerably longer than it really is. I felt that a two-hour flight to the East was something quite different from a two-hour flight to the West. It was a result of the education in the anti-communist spirit.

A few hours later we attended a service in a Russian Orthodox church in Minsk. There were primarily elderly believers around us – Byelorussian women who had experienced the aggression undertaken by the Wehrmacht and the SS against an "inferior race." One in four Byelorussians died in the second world war.

When the service ended and we took our seats in the buses, we saw elderly women waving at us. They were smiling and their faces were open: during the service they had learned the purpose of our visit. Their friendliness confused me. I felt uncomfortable at the thought that my compatriots had caused untold suffering to these people in the past.

I was born after 1945 and did not take part in the war. Nevertheless, I am a child of the German nation and its history. In the Minsk museum of the Great Patriotic War we saw substantial evidence of this history – photographs, documents and eyewitness accounts. Some of the elderly members of the group asked me whether I, as a younger person, felt guilty. I did not commit all these crimes, of course, but I also know that I can't get away from the history of my country, that I belong to this history. I felt ashamed and grieved. How could it all have happened and how could the people to whom my country had brought so much suffering be friendly to us?

But the most painful "stage" of our journey lay ahead. It was Khatyn, a village which, like many other villages, was razed to the ground during the war. This place is visited by many pilgrims on Victory Day. Blessing us before we set out on this trip, one of our priests said: "You are going to them as envoys of reconciliation. But you are going to beg for reconciliation, not to offer it." In Khatyn village I understood

GLASNOST

how right the holy father was.

We have returned home with a profound conviction that Soviet people are just like us, though they are on the other side of the same history, that they want peace and are actively searching for ways for mankind's survival.

Fyodor Timoshenko
Donetsk, U.S.S.R.

■ I belong to the senior generation of people who remember the war and know the price of bread, peace and freedom. In 1942, as a 16-year-old boy, I was forcibly driven to Germany, where I experienced the horrors of concentration camps, slavery, constant hunger and humiliation. I still find it very hard to recall the years spent in captivity.

Your magazine recently carried an article about the fate of Soviet prisoners of war and people forcibly driven to the Third Reich. An honest and timely article! I warmly support the idea of establishing in our country an organization of former prisoners of war and people driven into nazi slavery.

A MATTER AT ISSUE

The editors have received a letter signed by the chairmen of 270 cooperatives operating in various cities of the Soviet Union. It says in particular:

■ Though the latest session of the Surpeme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. admitted in fact that the March 14 decree (on the taxation of cooperatives) is flawed and stated that the public should be acquainted with a new edition of this decree before it is adopted by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, work on it is continuing in the old bureaucratic fashion.

We are suggesting that representatives of the cooperative movement should be invited to a Supreme Soviet committee that will consider a new decree. Perhaps it would be advisable to publish the draft in the national newspapers and hold a countrywide discussion. It would be useful, in our opinion, if co-op members, economists, publicists and other people concerned worked out their own proposals for the taxation of cooperatives. In this case the next session of the Supreme Soviet could consider several drafts of the decree.

Kari Tuomainen
Helsinki,
Finland

■ As a comment on Alexander Pumpyansky's article *(No. 19/88)*, I would like to say that socialism will become more attractive in the eyes of the public if all bans on travel are lifted. This also concerns freedom of travel for foreigners in the Soviet Union.

Of course, permission to make trips abroad without any restrictions will mean some risks for national security and cause a strain on the provision of the economy with highly skilled specialists. For some of those travelling abroad will prefer to stay there if they get a work permit. This will undoubtedly concern highly skilled professionals who may be offered higher pay abroad. Such a brain drain is common in the West, and I think the developed countries can cope with it.

This will certainly demand courage on the part of the Soviet people. However, I don't remember an instance when they lacked courage when it came to human freedoms and social justice.

Shortly before we went to press, a young man brought this letter to our office and asked us to publish it.

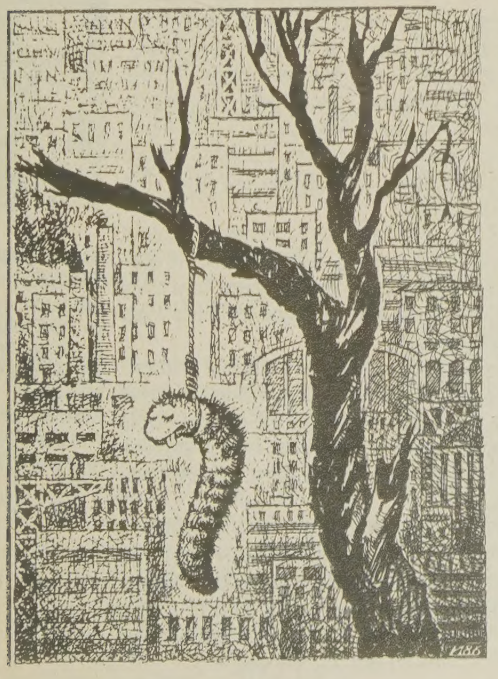
The Citizen Diplomacy Group
Moscow,
U.S.S.R.

■ By crossing the Soviet frontier without permission and landing his plane near Red Square in Moscow, Mathias Rust, a 19-year-old citizen of the Federal Republic of Germany, violated a number of international and Soviet laws, and the court passed a legally grounded sentence on him. At the same time, in undertaking his thoughtless flight Rust must have been prompted by his youthful idealism and a warm desire for peace and international brotherhood.

Nobody suffered from Rust's rash action. He has already spent a year in prison, gone through the hardships of the trial, and repented of his wrongdoing. It can thus be said that the aim of the sentence – to prevent people using Red Square as a landing ground for sport planes and compel light-minded young people to respect our frontiers – has been achieved.

In the light of our peace initiatives and in the name of love, humanity and mercy, and accord between nations, we urge the Supreme Soviet Presidium to pardon the young man. ■

AN ARTIST'S COMMENT



Drawing by Igor Smirnov

GLASNOST

PRIVATE OPINION

HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK

EVGENY TROITSKY
D. Sc. (Phil.)

Last week at their respective sessions the Supreme Soviets of the two Soviet Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan announced their attitudes to Nagorny Karabakh's desire to unite with Armenia.

The Armenian Supreme Soviet decided to ask the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet to consider favourably resolving this issue, given the wishes of Nagorny Karabakh's Armenians and the people of Armenia, and Article 70 of the Soviet Constitution, which asserts the right of nations to free self-determination.

Meanwhile the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet decided that the autonomous region of Nagorny Karabakh could not be transferred to neighbouring Armenia. It based its decision on the interests of preserving the country's constitutionally recorded, established national territorial structure.

The two parliaments met while unrest was continuing in Stepanakert, Erevan and Baku. At both sessions deputies censured the months' delay in debating the issue. Nor can one understand why, with feelings running so high in Transcaucasia, some of the media had kept silent for so long about the true state of affairs.

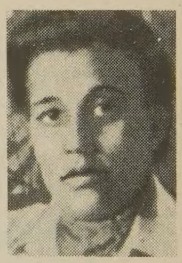
The memory of the recent events in Kazakhstan and the Baltic Republics is still fresh. Does not this all go to show that the time is ripe for us to tackle boldly the issues of inter-nationality policy? I believe it would be worth tabling the need to draft and adopt a comprehensive countrywide programme in this respect.

I feel that the Soviet parliament will not have an easy time finding acceptable, tactful and democratic means of normalizing the situation in Transcaucasia. Allow me in this connection to note the steps that are taken abroad to resolve acute territorial disputes. What I mean is condominium, the joint exercise of power by different states over the same territory. Would this sort of thing be appropriate in the U.S.S.R.? I think a socialist condominium, in this case the joint exercise of power by two Union Republics, could serve to alleviate tension in and around Nagorny Karabakh. Of course, this postulate would have to be considered from every angle and be approved, above all, by the conflicting parties.

BOHUSLAV KUCERA,
Deputy Chairman of the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly and Chairman of the Czechoslovak Socialist Party

At its latest session, the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly passed several major pieces of legislation including the law on state enterprise and the law on farming, housing and producers' cooperatives, which will unquestionably underpin the restructuring of the country's economic management. Along with the other changes in national economic legislation, they will pave the way for new dimensions to the country's basic production facilities and endorse new forms of management as, for example, the election of head managers, while expanding horizons for entrepreneurship and responsibility at enterprises.

It must be noted that what happened before these laws came up for parliamentary discussion did not at all follow the old stereotypes. The drafts were heavily amended in the process of a national referendum. While the government drafted the laws, special working groups in the Federal Assembly went through the concrete issues in detail and introduced several dozen amendments, which I think appreciably raised the standard of future legislation. The debates in the Federal Assembly itself were extremely frank. It was noted that automatic restructuring was out of the question, and that it was essential to purposefully implement the new principles and, moreover, in a context where obsolete plan targets would have to be borne with for the lifetime of the current five-year-plan period. Deputies from all political parties, as well as trade unionists and representatives of the young people, women and the cooperative peasantry addressed the Assembly.



AFEWERK TEKLE,
artist, a Deputy to the Ethiopian National Assembly (Shengo), Honorary Member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Arts

This time I came to Moscow to attend the celebration of the millennium of Russia's conversion to Christianity. The amicable relationships between the Russian and Ethiopian Orthodox Churches are rooted in the depths of centuries. The current experience of religious organizations in the U.S.S.R. is of major significance for my country, where the Church was disestablished after the 1974 revolution.

The changes that have occurred in Soviet society are astounding. Social activity is greater, people are now more open, and they have a stake in the success of their vast perestroika effort.

You have a genuinely creative atmosphere in your country today. I think the role played by art in the spiritual life of the people will grow: indeed it cannot be otherwise. This causes me to rejoice for my Soviet colleagues.

The Soviet-American summit in Moscow has had worldwide repercussions. The high-level dialogue continues. I think that this will broaden horizons for the public and peace fighters everywhere, including the Issyk Kul Forum, in which I am a participant.

We call on state institutions, political parties, anti-war, pacifist and religious organizations that hold dear the ideals of freedom and humanism, happiness and life.

We know that Soviet servicemen who have been taken prisoner are being treated inhumanly.

We ask all those capable of bringing closer the release of our friends by even a minute to be good to them for the sake of the future, and help us in our endeavour.

(From the Address of the servicemen who have done their internationalist duty in the Republic of Afghanistan)

They must come home!

The campaign to free our soldiers taken prisoner by Afghan anti-government forces is gaining in scale

We now know the price of our involvement in the Afghan conflict. A high price. A price in blood. 13,310 dead and 35,478 maimed and wounded (as of the beginning of May). The dead cannot be brought back to life. Their memory will live for ever. The disabled must be surrounded with universal care and attention and given every help.

We have recently learned another distressing figure. It has to do with servicemen who are neither among the dead, nor among those who have come back in good health or disabled. There is a wartime phrase that goes: "Missing in action." 311 servicemen are missing, and we know nothing of either their whereabouts, or their fate. How are we to find out where they are and what has become of them?

I put these questions to Major General **Valentin Khrobostov** of the Chief Political Administration of the Soviet Army and Navy.

"We are concerned about the fate of every missing Soviet serviceman," he told me. "There are 311 of them. This figure has been thoroughly checked and finalized. According to our statistics gleaned from various sources, about a third of them have been killed in action and remain unidentified; many were tortured to death in enemy camps or shot while trying to escape. We must find out what happened to each of them. We are doing that through our own channels. Our main objective, however, is to have all survivors released, and we would welcome cooperation in this effort from any quarters."

We must wring them out of the ruthless jailors' hands. I couldn't help recalling in this connection the terrible ordeals our ex-POWs went through on their return home after the Great Patriotic War, in Stalin's day. I asked the general whether there were any grounds for fearing similar consequences, and his sharp retort was: "This is not Stalin's time. No such repressions or punishments are, or will be, inflicted upon our officers and men who have seen action in Afghanistan, escaped and returned home. Our ideological opponents are spreading rumours to the contrary, seeking to mislead those who, owing to the force of fatal circumstances, have found themselves in the hands of those opposed to the present government of Afghanistan. Back home they are guaranteed normal lives and jobs."

The truth of this statement is borne out by the stories of those who have gone through the hell of mujahiddin imprisonment and finally reached home with the help of the International Red Cross or through other channels.

Five such ex-servicemen came to Moscow the other day and addressed a press conference in the editorial office of the Literaturnaya Gazeta.

Valery Didenko, a former rifleman, returned home with the help of the International Red Cross via Switzerland. He now lives in Kiev and works as a tower crane operator on a construction site. Konstantin Metelkov, who served as an anti-aircraft gunner in the province of Kandahar, was held in Pakistani territory for almost eighteen months as a prisoner-of-war. After returning home he stayed in the army for a while, and then went to work as a moulder at a Gorky house-building plant. He was put on a war veterans' preferential waiting list for a flat...

Garyagdy Charyev and Muhamed Yazkuliev are Turkmenians. One served in

They have been through the POWs' ordeals.

Photo by Valery Panov

Ghazni province, and the other in Parvan. Now Charyev works on a collective farm near Ashkhabad on family contract. Yazkuliev is a forestry technician. Abdukholik Zhurayev, a Tajik, served in an engineers' construction battalion near Kabul. Now a plasterer and house-painter, he lives in Dushanbe with his wife and two children.

All of them have nightmarish memories of their captivity.

Letters from Soviet people filled with anxiety about our soldiers taken prisoner in Afghanistan continue to pour in to newspaper offices, government institutions and public organizations. The theme of all these messages is that we must apply ourselves unstintingly to saving them and bringing them home. One cannot read without profound emotion letters from the mothers and wives of the missing servicemen to the organizations concerned with searching for Soviet citizens abroad.

Here is a letter from Altai Territory (we cannot reveal the writer's name without her consent): "In my heart of hearts I know that my son is alive. But where is he? In captivity, maybe? You must understand how I feel. I implore you to help me find my son. After all, he is a man, not a needle. I can't bear it any longer..."

A young woman from Perm whose airman husband did not return from a combat mission in Pandjshir gorge: "I can't believe that he is dead, and I shall never be able to believe it. This word 'missing' spells a great misfortune for our whole family... Nothing could be more terrible than that. I am sure that Sasha is alive, my heart tells me so, and it never errs. I've heard that from dushman camps POW officers are taken to Pakistan and then, maybe, somewhere else... I shall wait no matter how long..."

Through the international search service the organization sends out inquiries to many parts of the world... So far, there has been little to show for these efforts...

Nevertheless, we must redouble our efforts. Groups of representatives of the Soviet public visit the Pakistani embassy in Moscow one after another and hand over messages addressed to the President of Pakistan, asking him to help secure the release of Soviet soldiers being held by the Afghan armed opposition in camps in Pakistan. Young Moscow servicemen in the reserve, who have been through Afghanistan themselves, were the first to do so, to be followed by others. On June 13, an official representation on the subject was made to the Pakistani ambassador at the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"What can the Red Cross do in this respect?" I asked **Dmitry Venediktov,** Chairman of the Executive Committee of the League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the U.S.S.R.

"The traditional humane functions of the Red Cross," he said, "include finding out about those taken prisoner in wars and armed conflicts, rendering them every humanitarian aid, alleviating their sufferings and facilitating the exchange of POWs and their return home to their families.

"We have called upon the Red Crescent Societies in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, on the American Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), made up of Swiss citizens, to cooperate with us in every way in gathering whatever information there is about our POWs and in having them freed in any way as is called for by the fundamental principles of humanism and charity."

"What can the ICRC do?"

"It has its missions in Pakistan – in Peshawar, to be exact. Its workers maintain direct contacts with the Afghan anti-government 'alliance of seven.' However, the leaders of these groupings have so far withheld the information that interests us, namely, how many Soviet POWs they are holding and where."

"Do you think an attempt could have been made to take Soviet prisoners to the West somewhere and talk them into defection?"

"We are taking this possibility into account. The Red Cross is not a political, but a humanitarian organization. Human life as such is the ultimate value for us. Therefore we have asked the American Red Cross to pass on to us any information that might come its way about the presence of our soldiers in the U.S.A. or other countries so that we can let their families know that they are alive. This is the most important thing."

On the evening of Friday, June 17, a group of Muscovites – ex-servicemen back from Afghanistan – were collecting signatures in Moscow's Mayakovsky Square under their Address to all people of good will to do everything possible and impossible to have their brother soldiers released from captivity. Sheet after sheet was filled with the signatures of yesterday's fighters who had come to the square from various parts of Moscow. And not their alone. Passersby, young and old, stopped to find out what was happening – and added their signatures to the rest. Among them were Muscovites and visitors from Vinnitsa and Kzyl-Orda, Riga and Orenburg.

...Joint efforts are required to have our captive servicemen released. All of us must help in the attempt. Many passersby stopped to sign the Address, and so did I.

Alexander Usvatov

To make every effort

The Russian painter Mikhail Shemiakin is a name familiar to art lovers in many parts of the world, having had exhibitions in Leningrad, Novosibirsk, Paris, Tokyo, Osaka, New York and Rio de Janeiro. The artist, who currently resides in the U.S.A., is one of the sponsors of the International Committee for the Rescue of Russian Prisoners of War in Afghanistan. Other members of the Committee are prominent figures in the arts, culture and science from several countries, including French actress Marina Vlady, and historian Suzanne Massie and sculptor George Segal from the U.S.

"I have chanced to meet Soviet soldiers who have been prisoners of the mujahiddin, heard what they had to say and seen some nightmarish photographs," he said replying to questions from our U.S. correspondent Evgeny Andrianov. "Prisoners are treated brutally and suffer from lack of hygiene, water and food. Some die of malaria and dysentery, or when trying to escape. I realized that it was my duty as a citizen of the world and a Russian to do everything conceivable to rescue these boys, all the more so as the situation is now favourable. The Geneva accords have been signed, the Afghan leadership is conducting a policy of national reconciliation and the Soviet Union has started to withdraw its troops. However, the Afghan opposition were not represented at the talks and some of them are continuing their armed resistance. In this situation the efforts of public figures, not subject to diplomatic, political or ideological constraints can make a signal contribution.

"Though the members of the Committee are of different origins, nationalities and political persuasions, they share a common desire to commit themselves to this noble humanitarian mission. When Rabbi Bernard Mandelbaum was asked why he was on the Committee as there is not a single Jewish prisoner, he said that he was above all a human being.

"We are starting a fund which will be used to pay ransom for Soviet prisoners of war. It will consist of donations from members of the Committee, private individuals and public organizations."

Salaam! ...Shalom?

Dmitry Zgersky

Arab summits have more than once proved ineffective, even on the only problem that unites the Arabs, that of Palestine. The Libyan leader Muammar al-Gaddafi even stopped taking part in these meetings, considering them useless.

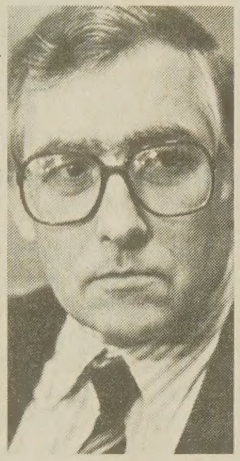
True, after 15-year absence he attended a special meeting of the Arab League in Algiers this month. But that was not the only new factor.

Shorftly before the summit two regional conflicts were settled in North Africa: between Chad and Libya and in Western Sahara. Algeria and Morocco established goodneighbourly relations, previously strained because of the dispute over Western Sahara. The idea of building Great Maghreb, a union of the Arab states in North Africa, was discussed in earnest, and Libya, Tunisia and Algeria started enthusiastically carrying out joint economic development projects. Relations between Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organization were restored.

All this certainly influenced the atmosphere at the summit. There had been no such unanimity in the Arab League for a long time. The leaders of 20 Arab states and the PLO adopted two documents. In one of them they declared their support for the Palestinian uprising. Another document, final declaration, deals with problems of the Middle East, the Iran-Iraq war in particular, and, what is the only digression from the subject, notes the favourable influence on the international situation of the steps towards nuclear disarmament being taken by the Soviet Union and the United States and expressing the hope that détente will spread to all regions. The inclusion of this point in the document indicates maturity in the Arab states' approach to their problems. There are no purely local conflicts.

The Algiers summit, to be sure, reaffirmed the Arab states' demand for respect for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and independent statehood on their territory under the leadership of the PLO, the only lawful representative of the Palestinian people. The Arab states agreed to give financial aid to the Arabs living in the occupied territories. They also proposed – and this is, I think, a very important initiative – that the Gaza strip and the West Bank now in revolt be placed under the U.N.'s aegis for several months. The idea is to put the occupied territories under a U.N. mandate.

Bad memories are usually associated with the word "mandate," because history knows not a few instances when a U.N. mandate failed to protect a country or territory from foreign domination. Nevertheless, in the present deadlock the idea of placing the occupied territories under a U.N. mandate seems reasonable, and the sooner the plan is implemented the better. Such a measure will end the bloodshed and set the stage for a radical solution to the Middle East problem.



A new Arab initiative: the ball is now in Israel's court

The U.S. policy in the Middle East was unanimously condemned by the summit as "hostile to the Palestinian people and the Arab nation." Thus, a whole region, a vast and influential one, censured the policy of the U.S. administration. This should compel Washington to rethink its priorities there. I think it unwise of the United States to pin its hopes on any country in the Middle East, on Israel in particular. The emphasis should be on a peaceful settlement acceptable to all parties concerned. Without spoiling its relations with Israel, the United States could clearly put pressure on it – not by means of stick and carrot, but perhaps by giving it less carrot. U.S. military aid to Israel is to make up 3.6 billion dollars. It appears that Tel Aviv is going to subjugate the whole of the Arab East.

Israel has often stated that it is threatened by the Arabs and that the occupied territories are a kind of buffer in the event of an Arab attack. It turns out that the massacre of Palestinians was also started to protect the security interests of Israel. In fact, however, measures have to be taken to ensure the security of the Arabs.

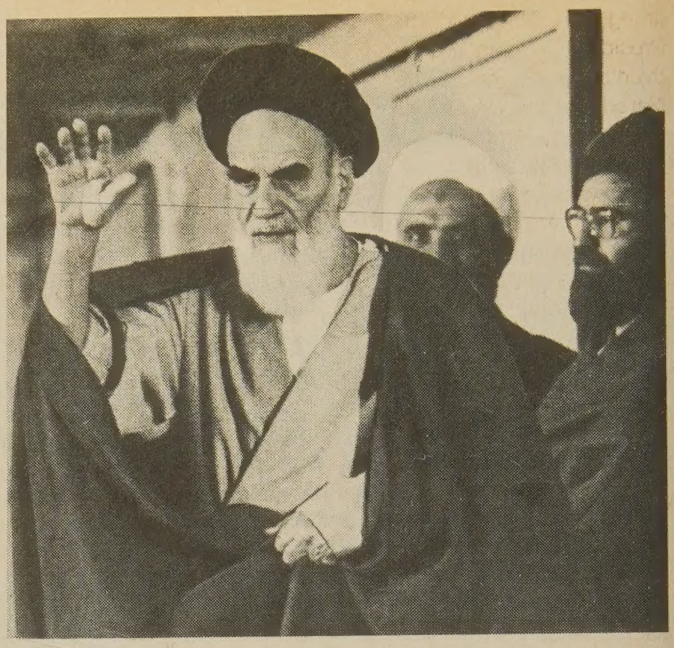
A group of 200 former senior officers of the Israeli army have launched a campaign to refute the widespread view that Tel Aviv needs the occupied territories for defence purposes. They assert that the maintenance of administrative control over 1.5 million hostile Palestinians presents a greater danger to Israel's security than the return of the territories it occupied in 1967. The officers seem to have estimated the situation better than the politicians.

The placing of the occupied territories under a U.N. mandate will, I think, guarantee peace and security for Israel itself and, simultaneously, provide conditions for the establishment of an independent and peaceful state of Palestine.

The Muslim greeting "Salaam" and the Hebrew greeting "Shalom" mean peace. Though the Arabs have nothing to greet Israel for, they have nevertheless said "Salaam" to it.

When will Israel say "Shalom" in reply?

Back to the past, or back to the present?



Ayatollah Khomeini: restricting theocracy?

Yuri Zhuravlyov

With the economy seriously crippled by the war, there is widespread disagreement amongst the Iranian leadership on how the nation should now develop. The Koran does not provide answers to all contemporary questions.

Though the front line is hundreds of miles from Teheran, the city has suffered greatly from Iraqi missile attacks. Ruined houses, factories and hospitals are a grim reminder of the war of the cities. According to official reports, some 1,500 people were killed in the latest round of fighting, and according to unofficial estimates twice that number. The words "jang" (fighting) and "shahid" (killed in action) are heard often in the long war communiqués and radio and TV broadcasts.

In Teheran's main square you can see a white-turbaned mullah exhorting believers to go to the front. People, tired and anxious, pass him by. Buses crammed with bearded youths can be seen in the interminable string of cars speeding along Revolution Street. They carry volunteers to the front. Most of the troops are composed of village boys and the young urban poor.

Tightening the belts

The war with Iraq is effecting not only the political situation in Iran but also the way of life of its people. An Iranian cannot marry, open a bank account or make a costly purchase without showing documents to prove that one of the men in his family is fighting at the front. It is practically impossible to avoid conscription. That is why some young people are trying to emigrate by any means. An estimated two million youths have fled the country in this way.

All difficulties are being attributed by the government to the war. It has, indeed, enfeebled the nation. According to Western estimates, Iran has lost a million in dead and wounded in the course of the more than seven years of fighting. The war has caused about 150 billion dollars-worth of damage. Premier Hossein Moussavi recently disclosed that 41 per cent of the budget has been earmarked for the war this year.

The Iranian economy rests on oil, the principal source of earnings for the treasury. In the past few years, however, oil revenues have not been sufficient to cover all the expenses of the war against Iraq. The Washington company Wharton Econometric Forecasting has calculated that last year, when prices fell to seven dollars a barrel, Iran earned only 6.6 billion dollars from its oil exports. As a result of Iraqi air raids, its oil output has fallen by a third this year.

Full and partial unemployment has increased sharply, and inflation is soaring. The population stands at about 50 million, with an annual growth rate of 3.5 per cent. Nearly half of Iranians live in towns. Overpopulation, accompanied by shortages of water and electricity, has become a serious problem.

A rationing system has been introduced for petrol and other fuels, as well as for vegetable oil, meat, milk and other products. Essential foods and articles can be bought with ration cards at officially fixed prices which are 20 to 25 per cent of those on the black market. Ration cards are distributed by mullahs in mosques, which allows them to exercise greater control over the population. Food subsidies cost the government roughly a million dollars a day.

Iran is today under heavy financial pressure. The population as a whole, on which the Khomeini regime leans, is beginning to show discontent. The defeats sustained by Iranian troops in the Fao peninsula and the area east of Basra, the increased casualties in the attacks on cities, which have been stepped up recently, and a drastic deterioration of the economic situation have led to anti-government demonstrations. The mass protests are directed, in particular, against the continuing war, as well as against a considerable decline in living standards.

But the authorities still consider all those who dare only speak up in favour of

a political settlement of the conflict "unreliable" and even "treacherous." The categorical demand for the resignation of President Saddam Hussain of Iraq is not even subject to discussion. Iran has declared that it will stop fighting as soon as Hussain is removed from power. Theoretically, Teheran can continue the war of attrition for a long time. Its population is three times as large as that of Iraq, and for a while it would even be able to do without financial aid from outside. But the war has dragged on for too long.

According to sharia

Ayatollah Khomeini has always believed theocracy to be the best form of government. His dream has come true in present-day Iran. All civil laws have been replaced by sharia, the body of Islamic sacred law and power in towns and villages has been assumed by mullahs, who are virtually unanimous on the need to preserve Islamic standards in public relations as well as in the spheres of the law, ethics, education and relationships between the sexes.

The policy of the clergy in the cultural field leads many observers to conclude that the Iranian revolution is essentially a kind of cultural revolution. Women have been compelled to wear a veil. There followed bans on painting, sculpture, listening to music, and alcohol. Public prayers on Fridays, a tradition that began to disappear in the 1920s, have been revived.

As for social problems, like the economic ones, they have not in effect been solved because of the complex relationship between legislative, executive and judicial power. A scholar wishing to find recommendations on economic issues in the Koran may simply lose his bearings in the various, sometimes mutually exclusive interpretations. Take, for instance, the relationship between the public and private sector. The clergy insists that under Islamic law the state has no right to interfere in the affairs of the private sector.

Or take the problem of land reform. The millions of hectares of land confiscated by the government from the Shah for distribution among peasants have in the end been turned over to mullahs.

How did it happen? Soon after the revolution the government launched a radical land reform. More than 25,000 committees for the redistribution of land were formed throughout the country. But the landowners did not sit idle either. They began to curry favour with the senior clergy. As a result, a group of eminent experts on Islamic law declared that the land reform bill was essentially anti-Islamic. They tried to prove that, in accordance with religious ideals, private property is sacred and inviolable. The dispute spread throughout the country. In 1981 Khomeini left it to parliament to make a decision on the issue.

After two years of debates the parliament worked out a rather conservative bill which did not provide for the redistribution of landed estates and virtually compelled their owners to lease land to peasants. But even this bill was vetoed by the supervisory council, which decides whether the laws adopted by parliament comply with religious tenets.

In the long run, only 35,540 acres of land were redistributed. As a result, agricultural production declined markedly. Deprived of the incentive to work on the land, peasants began to leave the countryside on a mass scale and move to the already crowded towns.

The government's attempts to nationalize foreign trade, confiscate land plots in towns in favour of the poor, and establish control over goods and raw materials met with fierce resistance from the clergy. The problems have not been solved, and the debates continue.

Who will prevail?

A debate over the future of the Islamic Republic has been in progress in the leadership since the beginning of the revolution. It abated somewhat when a war with Iraq broke out. Recently, however, the debate on purely domestic issues has flared up with new force. It has become evident that the government's economic and social policies have reached an impasse. In these circumstances the struggle between two groups has intensified in the higher echelons of power.

A number of influential leaders, called "radicals" or "reformers," are demanding a stronger government control over the economy. Among them are Premier Hossein Moussavi and Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani, who was recently appointed acting commander-in-chief of the army. Their attempts to lift restrictions on the actions of executive power are being virulently opposed by the clergy.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his supporters consolidated their position during the recent election to the Majlis, while the position of the conservatives relying on the fundamentalist clergy and rich merchants was weakened. Nevertheless, the conservatives are still able to obstruct the adoption of radical measures and even veto them. The supervisory council, consisting of conservative clergy, sees to it that laws comply with Islamic canons. In short, legislative power is also circumscribed.

Ayatollah Khomeini seldom uses his enormous power to influence domestic affairs. This does not mean, however, that he shows little interest in them. He wants to make the factional struggle less violent, and therefore avoids taking sides.

The conflict in the upper class is now so evident that the leadership has been compelled to admit it. Even Khomeini has recognized the existence of two groups in the country as well as in parliament. "The Majlis in which there is no divergence of views is not perfect, but this should not ultimately divide us into two hostile groups," he said in a recent radio and TV address.

The ayatollah's latest decrees support the advocates of economic and social reforms. Last summer Khomeini issued a decree on punishment for speculation and fraud, and not long ago he approved a decision denying communal and other services to employers who refuse to pay the minimum wage or contribute to the social security fund for their workers. But perhaps the most important statement was made by Khomeini early in January, when he declared that the government could enjoy absolute power, even over the clergy.

Thus, the ayatollah cleared the way for the functioning of executive power without restriction by Islamic laws and principles. There are also indications of a shift in favour of reforms in the field of legislation. It seems that Khomeini has imparted fresh strength to the reformers. However, considerable time and strenuous effort will be needed to extricate Iran from its political, military and economic difficulties, the more so as the conservatives are unlikely to give way without resistance.

Photo from U.S. News and World Report

Stability was at its peak in the early 1970s

This is the conclusion drawn by experts from experiments in computer modelling

Below Alexei Arbatov, D.Sc. (Hist.) is interviewed by New Times

New Times. I have before me the yearbook "Disarmament and Security, 1987," compiled by a panel of authors you headed. The book has attracted attention by virtue of its unconventional judgements, appraisals and prognostications relating to Soviet foreign policy.

Alexei Arbatov. True enough, the conclusions drawn by the researchers of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences' Institute of World Economics and International Relations set forth in the yearbook do not always coincide with the official viewpoint. But, of course, we do not claim to have said "the last word" on the subject or to have advanced the only correct solution. The yearbook offers food for thought, for further discussion by political scientists.

N.T. Foreign policy has doubtless always stood in need of an intellectual groundwork. However, your department which deals with problems of disarmament was founded only two years ago. Prior to that, neither the Institute of World Economics and International Relations nor the other institutes under the Academy of Sciences had any major independent section concretely and consistently devoted to the study of such questions.

A.A. You are right. Formerly few scientists studied the problem of disarmament. A vast quantity of factual data was either lost or fragmented in isolated files. I would attribute this partly to the fact that the Academy of Sciences did not adapt quickly enough to the changed political realities. There were also objective reasons. In the 1970s and early 1980s the study of international disarmament policy was regarded as a means of propaganda substantiation of our foreign policy. It was only when the concept of new political thinking began to be realized, when fundamentally new approaches to security issues appeared and when past mistakes were properly weighed, that it became clear that what was needed was truly scientific treatment of disarmament problems and not a doctrine serving propaganda purposes. Above all, what was needed was a basis for working out a purposeful and thoroughly considered policy.

I shall take the liberty of reproaching you journalists on that score. The standard of our journalistic treatment of world affairs does not measure up to the requirements of our foreign policy. This judgement is based on a number of TV interviews in which our journalists did not acquit themselves with distinction, as well as on the many superficial, one-sided and noncritical articles that have been published on the subject. It is for this reason that this area of our journalism is not taken seriously in the West, nor to some extent in the Soviet Union either.

It would be a good thing if our people working in the mass media had the possibility and the desire to make a systematic study of researches on these issues. The fact is, however, that scientists have far from always provided them with the kind of analyses and data that could enable them to become knowledgeable and well-informed analysts and commentators of the disarmament process.

N.T. Let us turn to the yearbook. It is a huge, 800-page compilation. Which of its sections do you think might be of the most interest to readers?

A.A. I would divide the readers to whom the yearbook is addressed into two categories: the general public interested in matters relating to disarmament, and the experts. For the former, I believe, the most interesting are the chapters and sections analyzing the current process of disarmament and the struggle for security. For instance, the reader will doubtless be surprised by the changes that have taken place in the positions of the sides in the course of working out a compromise solution in the matter of reducing the number of medium- and shorter-range missiles, and will find a clear, illustrated, intelligible explanation of the relevant treaty in its entirety.

We also examine diverse variants of strategic, technical and political problems arising at the negotiations on strategic and space armaments, on nuclear tests and the prohibition of chemical weapons, and explain the complexity of these problems and the mechanism of their interconnection.

The experts, I trust, will be interested in the section "Problems of Military Stabilities" in which the military doctrines of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. and of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and NATO are examined.

Discussed also are the criteria by which the proportions of strategic offensive weaponry are determined. The chapter "Strategic Equilibrium and Stability" is, to my mind, actually in a sense revolutionary. And not only because it touches upon problems which are at present in the focus of attention at the talks on reducing strategic offensive armaments. We have included in this chapter data obtained in experiments in computer modelling.

The model and the programme were worked out in accordance with the present nuclear balance between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. When this model was applied to an analysis of the past and the future, with the necessary adjustments, it produced extremely interesting results which demonstrate many aspects of the evolution of the strategic balance intuitively felt by politicians and scientists.

Stability was at its peak in the early 1970s. The calculations show that a first strike at the strategic forces of the adversary far from substantially diminishing the possibility of a retaliatory strike, would have given its initiator no advantage whatsoever.

In the course of the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s, with the deployment and modernization of guidance systems, with the preservation and even heightening of the mutual assured destruction potential of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S., the chances of gaining relative advantages by a counterstrike increased. This gave added incentive to have recourse to a preemptive attack in a conflict situation, which meant that the likelihood of nuclear war was increased and stability undermined.

Part of the scheme drawn up on the basis of computer modelling, beginning with the second half of the 1980s, resembles a rooster's tail. It is based on long-term modelling, depending moreover on whether the unlimited arms race is to continue or whether there will be a 50-per cent reduction. And if there will be a reduction, on what conditions – closer to the position of the U.S.S.R. or to that of the U.S.?

Analysis of the conception of a protracted global conventional war and the operational concepts of the two sides brings us to the conclusion that war between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty countries is impossible or at any rate unlikely. From this it follows that many conventional armament programmes can only be a reflection of certain departmental interests, but from the standpoint of the political realities they are totally unjustified.

N.T. The yearbook contains no few facts and figures relating to Soviet defensive strategy. How did you contrive to pierce the veil of secrecy?

A.A. We do not disclose any secrets. We use official Soviet information wherever possible. Where it is not available, and this you will agree remains a serious problem, we give our own analysis, based on the wealth of data available everywhere. After all, neither the London International Institute for Strategic Studies nor the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, for instance, has direct access to satellite or radar information. They painstakingly collect information from hundreds or thousands of sources available to the public all over the world and skilfully analyze it.

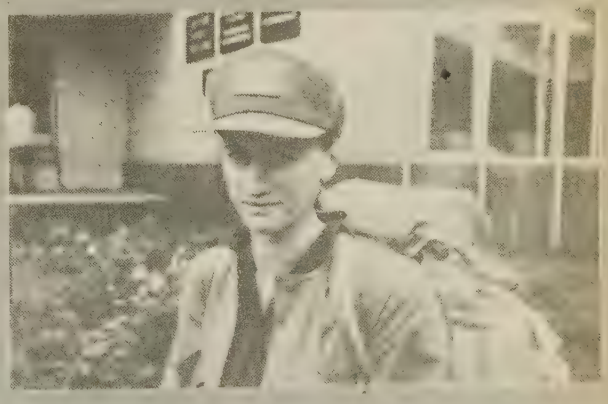
As scientists, we too cannot sit back with folded arms and wait for official information. Let me cite a very simple example. How many nuclear warheads does the Soviet Union possess? We do not know the exact figure. But there exist approximate data on the total number of warheads in the possession of all the nuclear powers – more than 50,000. By subtracting from this figure the nuclear potential of the U.S., Britain, France and China (which can also be roughly computed) we get the approximate number of Soviet warheads. We may go still farther in our calculations. Knowing how many warheads there are on strategic carriers (the figures were cited in an article by Soviet Defence Minister Yazov published in Pravda) and on medium- and shorter-range missiles, we arrive at a figure which more or less accurately reflects the nuclear potential of both battlefield and tactical weapons in the land forces, the air force and the navy.

If official Soviet data differing from ours are made public, we shall correct our own data accordingly.

We have already begun work on the next yearbook, for 1988.

Interviewer
I. KONSTANTINOV

Happy Journey!



At present some 200 Soviet people, including our special correspondent Galina Siderova from whom we expect regular reports, are in the U.S. taking part in a month-long coast-to-coast joint peace march.

Photo by A. Lapuzhin

The last snapshot of the heroic defenders of La Moneda Palace. President Allende (left) dons a helmet and a submachine gun.

Allende's legacy

Hernan del Canto

The last time I saw Salvador Allende was early on the morning of September 11, 1973, when I broke through the putschist cordon into the presidential palace of La Moneda to talk with him at the request of the Socialist Party. Proud and calm, he was prepared to sacrifice even his life for the good of the people and Chile. He had no doubts as to the historic significance of what was happening and of the outstanding role assigned to him by history. His faith in socialism and democracy was unshakeable. Salvador Allende would have been 80 on June 26.

I only once saw Allende in despair. That was on September 8, 1973, after a stormy but futile meeting of the Popular Unity leaders at which he accused them of reluctance to work out a common political programme in the face of a reactionary onslaught. On the same day he decided to use his presidential powers to hold a referendum so that the people could themselves choose the course of further progress. But it was not to be. The military staged a putsch.

Salvador Allende represents a whole era in the political history of Chile. In the early 1950s he became the acknowledged leader of the left, and in 1970 he was elected President of the country. He was at once a statesman and a militant leader of the working people.

As a young man, Allende vowed at his father's grave to spare neither his efforts nor his knowledge for the good of the people. It is very easy for a man to become a revolutionary when he is young, he said, but that man alone is worthy of the respect of the people and the party who remains a revolutionary all his life.

A popular leader

Allende was firmly consistent in defending the social and economic interests of the people. Even those who did not share his ideas and policy were unable to find any inconsistent action in his life. This explains the influence he enjoyed with the left.

Allende had an amazing ability to listen patiently to others and find a solution acceptable to everyone. I think he was often too tolerant. He was skilled in debate and sought to reach collective decisions through a clash of opinions. He ignored those who, to please their master, agreed with him while thinking differently.

Allende regarded the unity of the left and the popular movements as the cornerstone of the revolutionary strategy. His contribution to the policy of strengthening and expanding the united front of the left gained wide recognition in the country. He did more than anyone else to achieve unity between the Socialists and Communists in the 1950s-70s. In his relations with the Communist Party and its leaders, he acted mainly from the position and on behalf of the Socialist Party, which pursued a policy of national unity. Nevertheless, his personal efforts in bringing the two parties together played a considerable role. He took their services to the country into account, realizing that it was first necessary to unite the socialist forces and fully understand the leading social role of the working people.

He sometimes needed political courage as, for instance, after the strike called by employers in October 1972 in protest against the policy of the Popular Unity government. Allende formed a new cabinet by introducing representatives of the Popular Unity parties, trade unions and the military led by Carlos Prats, who was appointed Minister of the Interior. This political decision revealed his common sense and ability to respond quickly to an unusual situation in the course of the revolutionary process. Its significance can be better understood if we recall that the employers' strike of October 1972 was the culmination of the counter-revolutionary onslaught against the popular government and was politically rather than economically motivated. The

Hernan del Canto is a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Party of Chile and a former minister of the interior in the Popular Unity government.

alignment of forces changed in favour of the counterrevolutionary forces. Moreover, the reactionary circles, together with the generals and admirals, were openly hatching a plot with the aim of overthrowing Allende.

Within Popular Unity there was no agreement in assessing these events. Some people, even those holding top posts, asserted that a compromise with any circles, especially the military (though adhering to democratic principles), would mean a step backwards and a shift to the right. This was a gross error. Policy is not the art of the impossible. On the contrary, the aim of policy is to assess the situation and try to change it in a way that will help achieve the strategic goal, namely, favour the activity of the popular government.

In forming a new cabinet, President Allende was trying, I believe, radically to change the balance of forces in his favour and, simultaneously, to make the agreements reached a decisive factor in the revolutionary process. The main social forces were represented in this government. Its programme, drafted by General Prats and approved by all cabinet members and President Allende, had a clearly expressed national, democratic and anti-imperialist thrust.

Relying on the government, trade unions and the democratic sections of the army headed by General Prats and loyal to the Constitution, Allende wanted to elaborate a policy that would favour the democratic process and make a putsch impossible. Only some of the President's intentions were realized. The new cabinet normalized the internal situation and revived the process of democratization. But indecision of the leaders of some ruling parties and trade unions undermined all these efforts, and this in the end led to a plot by the conservative part of the army.

Allende was fully backed by the civilian members of the cabinet, a majority on the Central Committee of the Socialist Party, and many of the Popoular Unity parties. But their efforts proved insufficient. A historic chance was missed to build a powerful civilian-military group that would prevent a coup and strengthen the revolutionary process.

I would like to note one other quality of the President – his internationalism and his interest in Latin American affairs.

The struggle after his death

In his speech at the U.N. General Assembly in December 1972, President Allende revealed his plan for the social, economic and political reforms he was going to carry out in Chile with the approval of the people. "I have come here from Chile," he said proudly then, "a small country in which each citizen has today freedom of speech and conscience, in which there is no discrimination, which has universal suffrage by secret ballot under a multi-party system, in which parliament has now existed for 160 years, and there is an independent judiciary, and which has produced two winners of the Nobel Prize for literature: Gabriela Mistral and Pablo Neruda, who came from ordinary families."

Allende convinced Chileans that they would be able to build a free and just society, and this idea is still fresh in their minds. The dictatorship is still afraid of Allende, and the tyrant uses every opportunity to discredit the personality and legacy of the late President. Allende is a nightmare for Pinochet, who realizes that he betrayed not only the oath of allegiance and his military honour by deceiving General Prats, but also the traditions of Chile.

The legacy of Allende, which belongs to the entire country, can be expressed in a single phrase: only under his presidency did the people play the chief role in history. The life of the people under Pinochet differs tremendously from that which they enjoyed under Allende. Over five million Chileans are living in intolerable conditions. A negligible proportion of the population has concentrated power and wealth in its hands. It is for this purpose that the putsch was staged.

Chile has no future under a dictatorship. The only way out is a transition to democracy. That will not be easy to achieve, for Chile had experienced not simply a military coup but a real counter-revolution, whose social, political, human and ideological damage is incalculable.

The dictatorship can be overcome and democracy achieved only if a broad opposition capable of uniting the actions of the masses is formed.

INDIA

Dress rehearsal

SEVEN SEATS IN THE CENTRAL PARLIAMENT AND ELEVEN IN THE LOCAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES WERE CONTESTED IN THE BY-ELECTIONS IN EIGHT INDIAN STATES.

This represented the last serious trial of strength between the ruling Indian National Congress (I) party and the core of the opposition before the general election, which is to take place next year.

Of the seven contested parliamentary seats, the INC (I) retained only two. Opposition leaders construe the outcome as evidence of the ruling party's declining prestige and influence.

On the other hand, the upshot of the elections to the legislative assemblies in the eight states gave the INC (I) a better showing, though in recent years it had invariably lost out. In short, it held on to its five seats, but with a larger share of the vote.

The contest was probably fiercest in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, where the INC (I) candidate Sunil Shastri, son of the former Indian Premier Lal Bahadur Shastri, who was standing for the first time, was opposed by the experienced politician Viswanath Pratap Singh. Formerly Finance and Defence Minister in the Rajiv Gandhi cabinet, he is currently one of the leading figures in the opposition, who not only heads the Jan Morcha (popular front) established last October by several figures who were either expelled or themselves left the party but is also promoting the nationwide campaign charging the government with corruption. Sunil Shastri lost heavily, due in no small degree to the fact that Viswanath Pratap Singh had the backing of the entire anti-government coalition.

Viswanath Pratap Singh's landslide victory has appreciably intensified the political struggle in the country. It is again being loudly demanded that Rajiv Gandhi resign, parliament be dissolved and an early general election be held. Clearly the opposition is now attempting to coordinate efforts with an eye to the coming parliamentary elections.

In response, Rajiv Gandhi said that as the ruling party was usually soundly trounced at by-elections, he was grateful to voters for their support.

SERGEI IRODOV
our own correspondent
Delhi

A big advance in cultural life

These Americans came to the Soviet Union last year: some to take graduate courses, others to teach, and others again simply as members of families. For over 6 months they have been living at the Moscow State University hostel and seeing our society as it were from the inside.

Robert Thurston,
Miami University,
historian

At home I teach the Russian history. Therefore for me the chance to come to the U.S.S.R. was a great piece of luck. I remember that when nine years ago I was taking a course at Moscow Univerty, I began reading your papers, but soon gave up as they were so boring. Now I simply can't find the time even to take a glance at all that intetests me.

The subject of my studies this time is the working class in the Soviet Union in the thirties. You can easily imagine how much interesting new material I was able to dig out of the archives, obtain from conversations and find in current numbers of newspapers and magazines, thanks to perestroika and glasnost. On my return to the U.S. I hope to be able to write a book on the basis of the material I've collected (my first book, about Moscow on the eve of the revolution, was the result of my previous visit). When I return home I would also like to write and publish several articles about the Soviet Union today. Americans should know more about the Soviet people, understand them better, and get to know their ideas and concerns. Unfortunately, our permanent correspondents don't seem to be trying very hard to help in this – many of them arrive without having even taken the trouble to learn a few words of Russian...

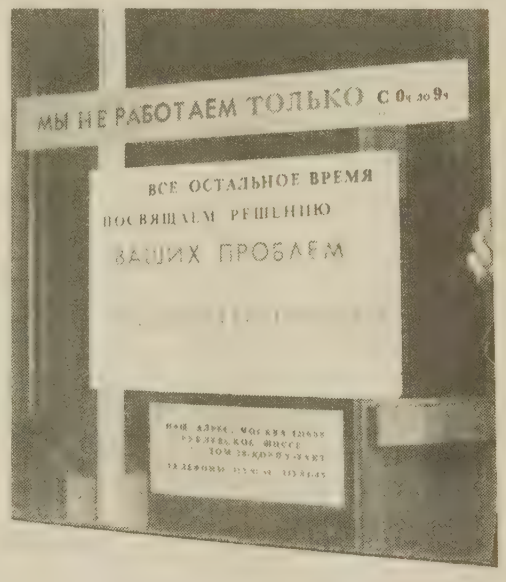
The main thing for you now, I believe, is not to stop at what has been achieved, but to push further and deeper along the road of glasnost. People should not fear the authorities – past or present. If a person is convinced he's right, he should be able publicly to state his criticism even of the highest-ranking leaders without fear of the consequences.

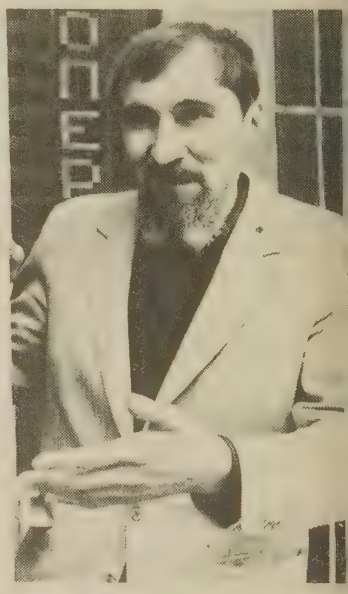
It seems to me (and I hope almost a whole year of getting to know perestroika in the U.S.S.R. gives me the right to express such a view) that what you need today is more glasnost as well as frankness in resolving inner-party issues...

In America there are copiers at every street corner, and all you have to do is put a coin in and make a copy.

Less paper and more action. And then your perestroika will become invincible.

...I have both seen and heard people say here that they want to live in peace with the United States, that they would like to see relations between our countries improve and strengthen. I hope that, unlike in previous years, the same can now be said of Americans.





Georgi Bukharov offers the computer services of the Tact cooperative of which he is chairman.

TASS photo

Having made a gigantic leap forward in the cultural life of the country, you are lagging greatly behind in the economic field. To tell the truth, when I arrived this time I had the feeling that the clock had been put back: that I was standing in the same queues, buying the same kind of food, hearing the same talk about shortages – everything I had seen during my previous visit.

During the months I have spent in the Soviet Union, not once have I come across a person for whom paperwork is more important than getting things done. There is very little modern technology, computers. Hence the rather low labour productivity. To this day I can't fathom why, trying to get absolutely harmless quotations from official sources, I had to fill in piles of papers and wait several hours (if not days) to obtain a xerox copy.

Personally, all that Reagan's visit to Moscow gave me was trouble, as there were so many people at the U.S. Embassy that for the first time ever queues appeared in our small shop where I usually buy various odds and ends. But speaking seriously, I sincerely believe that common sense and mutual understanding between our two nations will triumph, and that the latest meeting between the leaders of the two powers will prove to be an important and major step towards this goal.

Margaret Ziolkowski,
Miami University,
philologist

I love Moscow and the Soviet Union. Not only the landscape, language and culture of your country. It was here that I

and... the same old queues

met my future husband, who was taking a course here, and now we have returned as a family.

The first thing that struck us after our arrival was that people had begun speaking more openly, and not only about the past, but about what is happening today. What I have seen in the theatres and read in the press is astounding. It is both surprising and wonderful. The main thing is that people want to change things and believe there will be no turning back.

But in everyday life, the changes are regrettably very few. First of all – the queues. They both tire you and make you angry, they take up a lot of your time and can spoil your mood for the whole day. What is even more disturbing is that after having stood in a long queue you find yourself faced with a very limited choice of food or other goods.

Of course, perestroika in the U.S.S.R. has only just begun, and today it is only making its first steps. It would have been unrealistic to have expected immediate results. Nevertheless, it seems to me that in this field the changes have been unpardonably small. Day-to-day life is an extremely important area. And if the situation were radically changed in this area, perestroika would be bound to acquire millions of grateful supporters. I believe that perestroika should be developed in this area first of all.

The main thing today in Soviet-American relations is trust. Each summit increases it more and more. Americans and Russians should meet often – not just their leaders, but ordinary people. A time will come when Americans will shed their pride and begin learning the Russian language, putting as much effort into the job as Russians do into learning English.

Richard Thorpe,
Princeton University,
historian

This year has been one of my most successful ones: I have collected the material for my thesis and got to know many Soviet people – so now the soul of a Soviet person for me is no longer shrouded in darkness.

I don't have any particular hope that President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev will in the near future conclude an agreement on a 50-per cent cut in strategic arms. But their meeting cannot fail to improve the general atmosphere between our peoples. We stand only at the very beginning of a long and difficult road. But those who follow will find things easier: they will not be starting from zero; they will have a good legacy to lean on.

Steven Hoch,
University of Iowa,
historian

I've been to the Soviet Union several times. The changes since my last visit are immense! First and foremost – glasnost. Who read Ogonyok or Moscow News ten years ago? Today almost every issue of these and other papers and magazines are genuine best sellers.

Ten years ago in the year I lived in Moscow I was able to see only one American film. This time I not only have such an opportunity each week, but I also have a choice.

In America, everyone is talking about your perestroika. The interest in it is tremendous. In the U.S. certain hopes are also linked with the Soviet perestroika. But what kind? Many Americans for some reason think that after all your changes have taken place, the Soviet Union will be more westernized. However, as far as I understand, the Soviet Union has its own plans for perestroika. And to be objective, the naive hopes that the Soviets will become more capitalistic are hardly likely to be realized...

What struck me immediately when I started walking along the streets of Moscow a couple of months ago was that people were better dressed. Yet when I was preparing for my journey I had believed the changes would be greater. First of all, that applies to food and goods in the shops. The cooperative cafés have to some extent helped me out: they are expensive, but there are practically no queues and service is good. In that respect I would say you are doing the right thing. Many people still don't quite understand the essence of what they are engaged in. Recently I asked a taxi driver: "That sign says you drivers are on the cost-accounting scheme, what does that mean?" He replied that he didn't know...

My impression is that so far perestroika has consisted more of calls to action, but when it comes to action, there isn't enough of it. That for me, to tell the truth, was both unexpected and disappointing.

Even more disappointing was the fact that I found that some of my Russian friends do not believe in the success of perestroika. That's bad – because such an attitude greatly inhibits its progress. Perhaps in some things you are making mistakes, but in my opinion, today there is no other way. Unless, of course, you want a return to the old days.

As for Soviet-American relations, it's clear that a "big" treaty will be hard to get. Frankly, I was very surprised when talks began on a 50-per cent cut in strategic arms, since I am not at all sure that our Senators will ratify such a treaty, even if it is signed. I have serious doubts about the Americans... Let me explain: here in the U.S.S.R. people agree to parity with the United States in armaments. In the United States, however, few people are psychologically prepared for such an idea. Americans say: let there be parity, but it would be better if we retained slightly more armaments. Nevertheless, the significance of the summit is immense. It is the launching pad, the base from which the strengthening of our relations will be continued.

For myself personally (I'm joking of course) what I look forward to getting from Gorbachev and Reagan is a perestroika in archive affairs. In Moscow, I spend most of my time studying at the Central State Archives of Ancient Acts. It's not an easy job, but it is fascinating. But for some reason I (and other foreigners) are seated in a separate room and are thereby deprived of the opportunity to talk to Soviet scholars and seek their advice. Another great difficulty is that we weren't able to work with a catalogue of the contents of the archives. And a ban that was absolutely incomprehensible was that we were not allowed to eat in the same canteen as the archive staff.

Sona Hoisington,
University of Illinois, Chicago,
literature expert

In Moscow, you even seem to breathe differently. The new theatre productions, new novels, poetry, the gay young Arbat...All that is marvellous and gladdens one's heart. Shortcomings? Everyone has them! Don't be afraid of the difficulties, and then everything that stands in the way today will disappear.

Compiled by
Vladimir Poznyak

The socialism we renounce and the socialism we want

Discussing the CPSU Central Committee Theses

No more mindless obedience

Mikhail Nenashev

We renounce barracks socialism, which means overcentralization in all spheres, lack of respect for the people and lack of belief in their intelligence, the kind of socialism that offers no guarantees against the honour and dignity of the individual being trampled underfoot. We renounce the kind of socialism which means undisguised contempt for science, education, culture, i.e., for all that gives life meaning, makes it truly civilized and truly happy.

We are all for a socialism which signifies the triumph of democracy, which offers the Soviet people every chance to bring out their talents and abilities for the benefit of society. We profess the kind of socialism which will restore the people's lost belief in justice, their lost sense of it, and right to, real masters in their country.

The main obstacle we have to overcome in the way of perestroika is the mindless obedience inculcated in us over the decades, and its concomitants such as public passivity, and the stagnant atmosphere of complacency, smugness and irresponsibility which corrupts society.

A free competition of ideas

Vyacheslav Dashichev

It has long been known that any "monopoly... inevitably engenders a tendency to stagnation and decay," as Lenin put it. We know this to our cost. What did Stalin's monopolization of our ideology and of power lead to? State policy became disorientated and unrealistic. The people were put on starvation rations spiritually, and suffered from a famine in information. Socialist and general human values were mutilated beyond recognition. Science and culture were afflicted with "Lysenkoism." By the early eighties we were on the brink of an economic and spiritual crisis... Perestroika has saved us from the worst.

An entirely new model of socialism will now reveal the social effectiveness of our system in full, and give scope for the individual's creative self-expression. A society which encourages competition in ideas and opinions voiced freely and unhindered is capable of self-knowledge and, consequently, of self-improvement and dynamic progress. Nothing can do more harm to social health than uniformity of thinking and homogeneity of opinions, and their reduction to a common denominator laid down by the powers that be.

Let us turn to spiritual values

Dmitry Volkogonov

The process of the long-awaited renewal – or, more exactly, of the Leninist Renaissance – should have started long ago, after the 20th Party Congress. Having debunked the dictator, however, we left our way of life, system and way of thinking almost intact. A thirty-year "moratorium" set in! Therefore I would describe the present time as a moment of crucial choice. We have made this choice in words, but in reality...

In a letter to his son (to the future, as it were), Alexander Hertzen stressed:

Mikhail Nenashev, D. Sc. (Hist.) delegate to the 19th national Party conference

Vyacheslav Dashichev, D. Sc. (Hist.)

Dmitry Volkogonov, D. Sc. (Phil.), delegate to the 19th national Party conference

"Toppling false gods is necessary but not enough; under their masks one should seek reasons for their existence." We must remove not only "false gods", but what makes them as well. The source of one-man rule lies not in a single individual, but in a system which provides no social protection against bureaucratic abuses. We must put an end, once and for all, to Stalinism and its consequences. By Stalinism I mean a distorted theory and practice of socialism. Its basic manifestations, which make themselves felt to this day, are dogmatism, red tape, authoritarianism, which alienate people from active public life and turn them into mere tools in their superiors' hands. Such citizens often go by the rule of Molière's Tartuffe: "He who sins in the quiet commits no sin." The result is duplicity and downright hypocrisy. One cannot fail to see that a certain relapse into Stalinism in our society is largely a reaction by many to the immorality and corruption rampant in the period of stagnation.

We are of course striving for a scientific, Leninist socialism. But we have said all this before. The National Party Conference could go a long way towards making the Renaissance irreversible.

The conference is expected to elaborate political and legal guarantees against a relapse into the administrative bureaucratic system; to firmly establish glasnost, the rotation of elective managerial posts at all levels and the accountability of top officials to the nation. It is important to accord extensive scope for grassroots initiative, promote genuine democracy, emphasize cost-effective methods of running the national economy. Last but not least, it is necessary to reaffirm in earnest the spiritual and moral values of socialism – genuine justice and humanism.

Here is just one moral aspect of the matter: in order that the Renaissance should become a reality and tangible results should, at last, be achieved in the social and material spheres, everyone (I repeat, everyone) must do his civic, Party and service duty to the best of his ability rather than for the sake of mere form. To quote Goethe, "If you want to find out what metal you are made of, do your duty!" The fate of socialism demands that we do our duty.

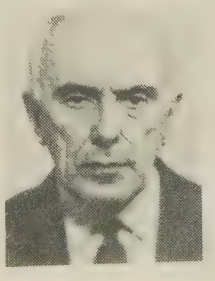
We are now talking a great deal about the past as we quench our thirst for the truth. We now know that the truth is not a luxury – it is one of the most loyal "allies" of Lenin-style socialism.

There are no ready-made models

Gherman Diligensky

The nature of real socialism can only be grasped by tracing its history. As the Gospel has it, in the beginning was the Word. This fully applies to socialism. Great ideas such as Public Ownership, the Emancipation of Labour, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat preceded the practice of building the new society and gave it a direction. The inevitable question arises: why did people inspired by those ideas build something other than what they had wanted to build? After all, scientific socialism grew out of the humanist world outlook of the 19th century, out of the desire to subordinate social progress to the interests of man, overcome the destructive anarchy of the capitalist economy, and achieve a harmonious and planned development of the productive forces. Alas, the economic and socio-political reality of the country where the socialist revolution first triumphed is far removed from these ideals today.

What are the reasons for such an outcome to the agonizing, heroic and intense process of socialist construction? For all the immense role played by objective historical circumstances or the personalities of certain political leaders, I do not think these factors – let alone the ideals and values under the banner of which the socialist reforms were carried out – are wholly responsible for the situation in this country today. To my mind, the **root cause** lies in the method of implementing these ideals, in the absolute faith in the efficacy of **pre-conceived plans** for social development, in regarding the social environment as malleable clay in the hands of the omnipotent Demiurge. The idea of creating a new society and a new man was reminiscent of the Biblical story of God creating Adam. It was believed unnecessary to apply to socialist construction the Marxist principle that holds that matter is primary in relation to consciousness; objective economic and behavioral laws were replaced by the primacy of the political will ("no fortresses are impregnable to Bolsheviks").



Gherman Diligensky, D. Sc. (Hist.)

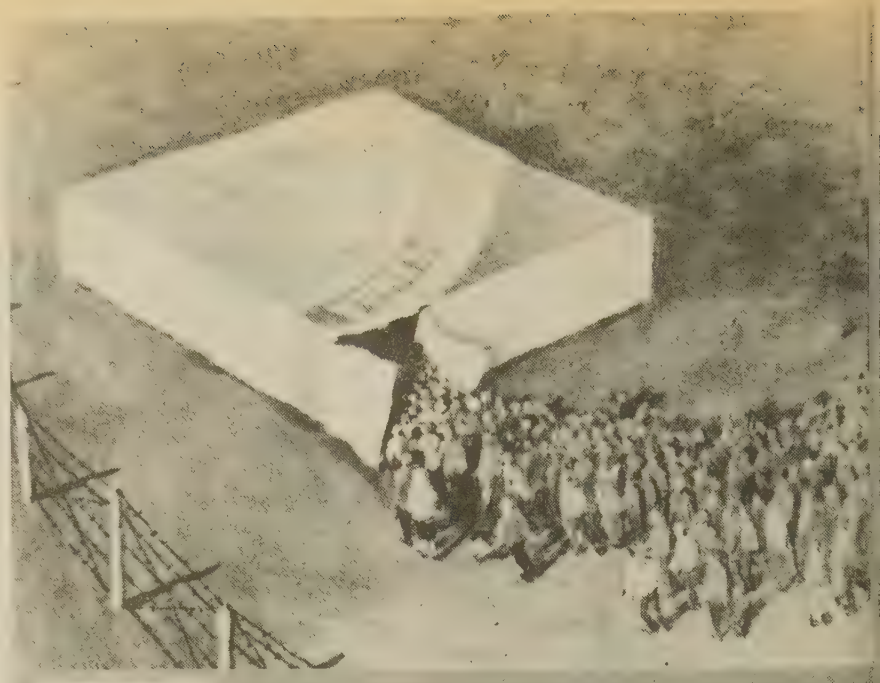
The arbitrary absolutization of the role of political power led to the erosion of the humanist and democratic principles of socialist teaching. By definition, socialism seeks to harmonize the private and the collective interest. The transformation of political power into the omnipotent and monopolistic Demiurge of Social Development means neglecting the individual and groups of individuals; the function of formulating and expressing common interests is usurped by the "centre" – the leader and the exclusive political elite. The social system which took shape here in the thirties was distinguished chiefly by the concentration of economic, political and ideological power in the hands of a single hierarchical Party and state machine. Production relations became a mere extension of the political power structure, and those engaged in economic activity were deprived of even rudimentary independence. As a result, there emerged not only a centralized bureaucratic system of government but a special mode of production and a special type of society which could be described as étatist.

It would be absurd to deny such a society the ability to cope with major historical problems. A tremendous concentration of political will ensured the huge extensive growth of productive forces, the organization of national defences, breakthroughs in certain spheres of science and technology (nuclear energy, space research), and impressive achievements in the social sphere. However, its creative potential inevitably peters out as emergency situations give way to "normal" ones, when it is no longer possible to keep society overstrained and maintain the masses' enthusiasm for sacrifice fostered by their belief in a "bright future." The need for ways of making social progress **self-regulating** comes to the fore, but this is incompatible with the very nature of the étatist system, which suppresses independence and initiative in any sphere of public life. Stalinist tyranny, illegality and repressions are a concentrated expres-

sion of étatism. Even when these "extremes" have been done away with, the étatist system fails to cope with bureaucratism, which is inherent in it, and which causes decay and stagnation, estranges the individual from society, and leads to widespread social passivity.

It is very important to realize that there is no ready-made model of socialism anywhere. Certainly there exists a system of socialist principles and values such as humanism, democracy and social justice, which are supposed to make socialism qualitatively superior to capitalism. However, principles and values do not form, in themselves, the model of a real socialist society. They are only the supreme ideals to be striven for in renewing it. It would be a grave error, in my view, to proceed from these ideals in "designing" the socialist society of the future. This would amount to amnesia in respect of the lessons of the recent past, to the revival of the illusion that a new society can be built like a new house. In that case we would have to rely, once again, solely on the genius and omniscience of the "architect" and, consequently, to put him in absolute control of the "construction project"... This could be fraught with new surprises, perhaps no less tragic than those of old.

Let's face it, there is still no "genuine" ideal model of exemplary socialism. Therefore, socialism can only be built through practical **creative quests** for new forms of social structure embodying humane socialist ideals. Such quests presuppose social experimentation, an unlimited **choice** of options and a **wide range** of economic, social, cultural and political practices. It is in these conditions that socialism can become an **evolving** and **self-regulating** society. Such self-regulating and evolution do not necessarily preclude volitional, even centralized, control of social processes. They only mean that economic and political decisions are made with due account taken of different opinions, practical experience, different social and group interests, and all the contradictions and problems of social development, and that optimum solutions to these problems are sought. This should not be expected to be plain sailing all the way; there are bound to be conflicts and compromises, errors and setbacks, and the line taken will have to be continuously corrected.



The artist Pyotr Belov, who died prematurely (see New Times, No. 23), dedicated himself to re-creating, in terms of his art, the tragic events of recent history... Reproduced here are two Belov pictures: "The Great Lenin" and "Belomorkanal" (a brand of cigarettes named for the convict-built White Sea Canal).

Evolving socialism is unthinkable unless it is ready to examine and critically assimilate other societies' experience of economic, social, political and cultural progress. Some journalists fear the danger of Soviet society being culturally and even economically "colonized" by the West and make a bugbear of liberalism. All this hue and cry is not so much against rock music or joint ventures, as against a situation where emotions and simplistic judgements will no longer do, and where knowledge, original ideas and an ability to make out our case with well-reasoned arguments are required for self-assertion. In order to justify itself, the authoritarian-étatist system needed confrontation with the rest of the world and isolation from it. What we want is real competition with capitalism, which we intend to win.

This calls for the ability to learn from our partner's experience, for global vision and greatly improved intellectual standards in ideology and policy.

The more varied, the better

Evgeny Ambartsumov

We renounce barracks socialism, which was actually not socialism at all.

We want a normal socialist society based on the concisely expressed model of Marx and Engels: "A society in which free development of each is a condition of free development of all." In other words, we want the state to be for the people rather than vice versa, and by the state I mean a society which, in accordance with a forecast by Marx and Engels, should be much less étatist than it has been heretofore. The more varied socialism is, and the greater the

Evgeny Ambartsumov, Cand. Sc. (Hist.)

extent to which it combines economic diversity with democracy, the better for the people and for socialism itself. The answer to the question of how to build such socialism lies in defining the role of the Party more precisely; in promotion of social pluralism, changing our electoral practice, and making elections competitive.

The dangerous formula of social equality

Vladimir Lakshin

The word "socialism" has been as much abused in history as other great words like "good," "faith" and "humanism." To me, self-glorification is a sure sign that socialism is inauthentic.

Vladimir Lakshin, D. Sc. (Philol.)

Within living memory, socialism has called itself "victorious," "mature," "advanced" and so on under Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev. The danger of the idea of social equality lies in that any political intriguer, petty dictator or tyrant can construe it as the people's equal subordination to the will of the Party or the state and, in the final analysis, to his own "outstanding" personality and the group of people he represents; as a uniformly low living standard for the majority of the people; as all citizens being equally rightless and equally unable to speak their minds; as a procrustean bed in which to cut down or stretch artists and thinkers for a certain pattern. During the reign of terror, equality meant all being equal before the illegality of wholesale incarcerations and executions. Nevertheless, the idea of equality has always been so attractive to the masses, that even the ultra-reactionary nazi regime used it in its demagogy, calling its party National Socialist.

Born in 1933, I have lived most of my life to the drumming of ideological tom-toms which invariably glorified the successes of socialism; all of us, myself included, were meant to feel deliriously happy at having the good fortune to partake of its blessings. At the same time, as one poet put it, "as far back as I can remember, I remember queues..." I remember arrests and rehabilitations, old follies repented and new ones committed. So I hate self-glorifying, official, uniformed socialism, and socialist bureaucracy camouflaging its interests and its power over the people with loud talk about equality and the public weal.

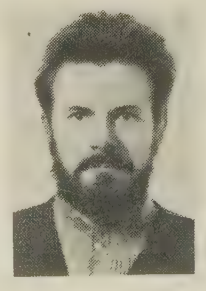
The socialism of Marx and Lenin is called scientific because their theoretical concept of a new society has become a material reality. However, we have witnessed this society's progress since its infancy, and we can say away from the Marxist classics' keenly observant eyes that it has been, and remains, extremely unpredictable. We have witnessed genuine socialist values created the hard way, and its objectives and ideals effortlessly distorted.

Perestroika can give a new impulse to socialism in the genuine and lofty sense of the word. This will happen, however, only if the process of democratization and the democratic enlightenment of the masses penetrates profoundly, if the nation as a whole approves and freely expresses its support for these changes at all levels, from factory-shop meetings to large public forums. This calls for a great deal of political and intellectual education on the part of the vanguard of perestroika. The effort will take years, but I believe that it will succeed in the end.

Man is not a cog

Andrei Nuikin

It's time we stopped playing with words and said, in no uncertain terms, that we do not renounce socialism at all. It has now long been clear to all sober-minded democrats and Communists that what we have called "ad-



Andrei Nuikin, art critic

vanced," "mature," etc., socialism is barracks socialism, i.e., something all but diametrically opposed to socialism.

It is impossible to go over to socialism without the confiscation (nationalization) of the means of production. This is obvious. But to identify this – which, as Lenin pointed out in a critique of left-wing extremists, required "determination" alone (i.e., armed force) – with the socialization of producer goods means to misunderstand the word "socialism." To socialize means to put the working people in full control of producer goods – a problem which has not yet found a practical solution anywhere in the world.

This is an epoch-making objective which is extremely hard to achieve because the old experience of primeval communism can hardly be of much help today in looking for new classless social structures, political mechanisms for self-management, principles of owning property in common, in working out new habits and a new morality... As for the forms of classless relations suitable for modern civilization, they cannot be extracted from popular booklets or laid down by decree; they are born in agonizing confrontations, in an intricate and conflicting interaction between theory and practice, in the course of active and determined efforts by millions of people who are no angels, but slaves to old habits, prejudices, selfish interests, and so on.

In order to attain a level of social development worthy of the name "socialism" we have to:

1. Build up an economy better, more efficient and more humane than that under capitalism at its best.

2. Develop and establish a democracy that would be a sufficient improvement on any, even the most advanced, bourgeois democracy to merit the name of **"people's rule."**

3. Create a culture that would assimilate the best of what world civilization has accumulated in all its stages including the capitalist one.

These are tall orders. Nevertheless, socialism is immensely creative by nature, and it would be a grave error (a discouraging one, in fact) to think that making all this a reality will take centuries, if not millennia.

Socialism is the triumph of common sense, it harmonizes the individual with society, draws upon the enormous intellectual potential built up by mankind over the millennia, thrives on collectivism, epitomizes freedom, benevolence, dignity, solidarity... Upon becoming a reality, movement in that direction can overwhelm one with its impetuousness because it accelerates in a geometrical progression. But only **upon becoming a reality,** mind you!

Is it any wonder that we, who gave a solemn oath to build communism "overall" by the year 1980, are seeing nothing of the kind? The ideologists, builders and guardians of barracks communism led our society in the opposite direction. This is not to be wondered at, either. What we habitually called "public property" was, in fact, state property. And the state, as Marx put it, is the private property of the bureaucrats. Socialization, people's rule and other substantive attributes of socialism are ruinous to them as private property owners. In our case, the "state" means not only nationalized means of production but, as elsewhere, the judiciary, the army, the law-enforcement and state security agencies, schools, the information and propaganda media... All this has also been the "private property" of our bureaucrats. Under the circumstances, it would be naive to try to explain everything away as "imperfections" in the theory of socialism, mistakes, deviations and delusions.

Since the late twenties, the theory of socialism as a formation actually lay stagnant and our textbooks of scientific communism represented it as something extremely dull, formal, eclectic and even, at times, a parody. The practice of barracks socialism was worthy of its theory and was a solid answer to the question of what kind of socialism we renounce. We renounce a "socialism" under which man is destitute, humiliated and rightless, under which he is a mindless, passive and (of necessity) obedient "cog" in the dehumanized state machine. May I ask: what has all this to do with socialism? I am not an adherent of the sentimental "bright future" concept. Any social formation is unthinkable without contradictions, imperfections and "traps," but then every phenomenon has its specific fundamental characteristics (and its specific shortcomings, too) which set it apart from others. Well, in barracks socialism I cannot discern a single fundamental characteristic of real socialism. Is it, nevertheless, a step towards real socialism? It might be. The progress of perestroika will tell. Even the slave-owning system was a step towards socialism as compared with the primitive communal system. However, this does not mean that we should look for features of socialism in it.

The question remains open

Alexander Bovin

In the most general terms, I would put it this way: we renounce the model of early socialism, immature socialism disfigured by a number of objective and subjective factors.

More specifically, we renounce authoritarian socialism under which all political power is concentrated in the hands of a tiny group of leaders (or even only one leader) functioning beyond any public control.

We renounce bureaucratic socialism under which the "ordinary people" become mere "cogs," powerless in the face of a huge and powerful apparatus which is mainly interested in self-preservation and extended self-reproduction.

We renounce inefficient socialism devoid of the inner stimuli to raise labour productivity and characterized by permanent shortages of food, quality products, services, housing.

We renounce soulless socialism which degrades moral values and moral criteria, justifies any means towards the "great end," divides people, dooming them to live in an atmosphere of fear, suspicion, servility and mutual ill will.

We reject dumb and voiceless socialism which feeds citizens on rationed doses of information, prettifying our reality and drawing a veil of secrecy over the work of Party, state, economic and other bodies.

We renounce homogeneous socialism which denies the fruitfulness of pluralism in opinions and ideas and "replaces" freedom of artistic and scientific endeavour with dogmatism, apologia, oppressive mediocrity, dull uniformity of attitudes and assessments decreed from above.

We renounce socialism which isolates itself from the rest of the world, dreads free competition between ideologies, spiritual values, ways of life, which divides people into those "allowed" and "not allowed" out of the country.

And now, what kind of socialism do we want? Paradoxically, this question remains open today, when Soviet power is in its seventy-first year. The answer is to be provided by our social science and by our social practice. My answer, which reflects the way I see the problem, is of a journalistic rather than scientific nature and boils down to the following: in each of the previous paragraphs the "mathematical sign" should be reversed.

At the risk of being accused of plagiarism, if not something worse, I would say that we need socialism with "a human face." That is, a society in which

Alexander Bovin, Izvestia's political analyst

one would feel good, in which one would feel an individual, a citizen, a master of his own (and our common) destiny.

We need the kind of socialism under which we, the people, stop thanking the Party and the government for the good care they take of us. It is the Party and the government that ought to thank us...

The state is responsible to its citizens

Vladimir Kudryavtsev

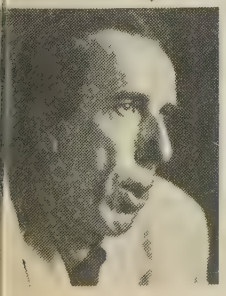
We renounce the command and administrative system which is already more than 50 years old. There is a school of thought that in the twenties such a system was necessary and justified... In the economic sphere, this system prevents us from making full use of industrial and agricultural potential; in the political sphere, it blocks the creative potential of the people and suppresses democracy; it fetters, sterilizes and destroys artistic talent.

One can hear some people say today that the administrative and command system is a variety of socialism. My answer to this is that such a system is a distortion of socialism!

While rejecting what's bad, we must envisage the positive model of our society. The 27th CPSU Congress outlined the socialism we want and laid down its fundamental principles. The laws on state enterprise, on cooperatives, on private enterprise give us an idea of the economic aspects of the socialism we are now building. The laws on the nationwide discussions of matters that concern all, on appealing against miscarriages of justice, last year's experiment with multi-candidate elections, have laid the foundations for the political developments to be promoted later. These are the institutionalization of glasnost (not as a slogan but as a form of activity), the reform of the judiciary, and the enhancement of the role played by the Soviets.

As a lawyer, I would emphasize the following objectives: to sharply delimit the functions of Party and state bodies; bring more democracy to Party work; form a law-governed socialist state relying upon law and using law as a means of managing society. The law expressing the will of the people must reign supreme. State, party and public organizations, work collectives and all officials and private individuals should strictly abide by the law. It is not only citizens who are responsible to the state; the state also has its responsibilities to the citizens.

Can this be regarded as an ideal model of socialism good for all times and all peoples? No, socialism is varied in form, and each of the world's socialist states has its unique distinctions which enrich the face of socialism. Our own notion of socialism will continue to develop...

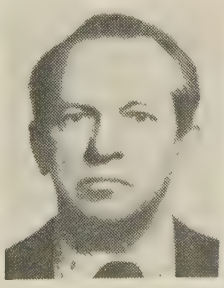


Vladimir Kudryavtsev, academician

A union of clever and like-minded people

Anatoly Butenko

As a result of Lenin's concept of socialism having been replaced by Stalin's vision of socialism in the late twenties and the early thirties, a Stalinist state-administrative socialism was built in our country as a whole towards the end of the thirties. Dominated by Party and state bureaucracy, based on mass repression and fear, devoid of democracy and openness, this kind of socialism was quite in keeping with classic Marxist notions of primitive, barracks type rather than genuine socialism. Marx described this model of socialism as a system denying human personality everywhere. As Marx and Engels put it in their article, "The Alliance and the International Comradeship of Workers," each will seek to produce as much as possible for society and to consume as little as possible and this awareness of one's usefulness to society will constitute the whole pride and ambition of the people, who will then be headed by the supreme leader, anonymous and obscure, "our committee."



Anatoly Butenko, D. Sc. (Phil.)

At the 20th Party Congress in 1956, Soviet Communists made an early attempt to restore the human face of their social system. For many reasons this attempt failed. Notably, it was the same forces – the forces of Party and state bureaucracy that oppose perestroika today, the real inspirers of Nina Andreyeva's article in Sovetskaya Rossiya – that disapproved of the Khrushchev line, "plucked up their spirit" and reversed the course of events in the mid-1960s. They blocked the programmes of action drawn up by the 20th and 22nd Party Congresses, thus bringing about a long period of stagnation and leading Soviet society to the brink of crisis.

Now a second attempt has been made to get rid of the "Stalin-Brezhnev" model of socialism, which suits the interests of "omnipotent nonentities," as Nikolai Vavilov called bureaucrats.

The profound and truly revolutionary meaning of perestroika consists in transforming state-administrative socialism with its bureaucratic excrescences, which we have inherited from the past decades, into real socialism. In its content – i.e., its fundamental contradictions, its motive forces and the nature of the conflicting forces – this revolutionary transformation has no analogues in our history. This explains the singularity of the current processes, which alarms many, throws them into confusion and makes them feel like strangers in today's changed world.

It is my ardent desire that perestroika should succeed and bring about genuine socialism promoting the ideals of the working man, a socialism under which an economically independent individual should not be a mere hireling of the state. This is possible given the existence and development of alternatives such as cooperatives and private enterprise. I want the kind of socialism that makes man not only a producer, but also the owner of material and spiritual assets; a socialism based on a self-governing society of civilized, educated and intelligent people; a socialism where the free development of each is a condition for the free development of all; where society is headed not by a faceless anonymous collective but by an open alliance of clever like-minded persons concerned not with personal power and self-interest, but with their country's weal.

A good law is only half the battle

Vitaly Bordunov

Human rights are based on legal guarantees – this is axiomatic for lawyers. But not only on legal guarantees. The exercise of human rights depends on the level of democratic development, on public institutions and political structures, on the status of the law in society as a whole and on the observance of high moral standards. All this determines the international reputation of a country in the sphere of human rights.

The Soviet legal system is today undergoing a process which places the emphasis on the human aspect of the law. Ever more attention is being paid to human rights, and our laws in this field are approximating to the world ideal.

Nevertheless, the introduction of democratic principles in the legal system is proceeding with difficulty. We proclaim the principle of self-management, but in practice administrators tend to reduce the rights of the collective to nought and do so with impunity. As a result, the economic independence of work collectives proclaimed in the Law on the State Enterprise is paralyzed. Conviction of innocent people, illegal methods of obtaining evidence during preliminary investigation, and the tendency on the part of the prosecution and the courts not to give the defendant the benefit of the doubt – all these negative features still occur in investigatory and judicial practice. And how difficult people find it to secure the exercise of their rights by turning to executive committees of Soviets and to various state institutions!

At present everything connected with the drafting of legislation, control over the observance of the law, and the introduction of amendments to laws is the monopoly of the state apparatus. Our social system has no really democratic means of countering this.

What is needed is a mechanism of democratic control over the legal system. This applies primarily to the procedure of drafting laws. The bureaucracy has become adept at passing laws which wholly or partly emasculate the original purpose even of laws that have been submitted for nationwide discussion. Glasnost has not yet penetrated to the level at which the fate of a law is decided. It is therefore not surprising that a raw, inoperative law can appear, even though some useful proposals and amendments have been suggested in the course of public discussion.

This applies, unfortunately, both to the law on work collectives and the law on the procedure for legal action in cases of abuses by office holders. And what of the instances when a word from the head of a local Party organization or Soviet has been law for the judge, the prosecutor or the investigator? The scale of the problem may be judged by the fact that more than 5 million complaints are received annually in Moscow from the various localities.

Not infrequently it happens that an excellent law is adopted, but is promptly made unworkable by regulations of all kinds. Opposed to the authority of the highest legislative body – the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. – is a powerful executive authority which often rewrites the supreme law. The absence of constitutional supervision creates a favourable climate for unlawful law-making the pernicious effect of which undermines the rule of law. Is there a real force that could fundamentally alter this situation? There is.

The Soviets should form commissions on human rights

An exhaustive inventory is now being taken of the entire potential of socialist democracy. This applies in particular to the Soviets. Perestroika has sharply posed the question of cleansing them of bureaucratic accretions and deformations, of restoring genuine government by the people through the Soviets. And it seems to me that the Soviets – after a thorough overhauling – should set up commissions for the defence of human rights which would exercise supervision over a wide range of questions relating to those rights.

Human rights commissions should be formed at all levels of Soviet government. In the Supreme Soviet such a commission could supervise the defence of human rights on a countrywide scale. For instance, if a constitutional court is created, this commission, together with that court, could verify the conformity of new Constitutional enactments with our country's international commitments under human rights covenants. A vast amount of work could be done by regional, city, district and rural commissions for the defence of the rights of citizens. The examination of complaints, for instance.

Public organizations, too, should not stand aloof from the defence of human rights. For example, they could examine projected legislation and offer their own suggestions.

Enlistment of the Soviets and public organizations in the defence of human rights would be an important step towards the real and serious democratization of our legal system. Precisely this objective was set forth in the Theses for the 19th national Party conference, the object of which is to build a socialist state based on the rule of law.

Regrettably, there is no mention in the Theses of the role the Soviets could play in accomplishing the tasks involved in the creation of such a state. Indeed, who if not the Soviets should concern themselves with the further expansion and deepening of social rights (to work, leisure, education, health protection and social security), with the creation of the material and legal conditions for the exercise of Constitutional freedoms (freedom of speech, the press, assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations, freedom of conscience), with the strengthening of the guarantees of the personal rights of citizens (inviolability of the person, the home, the privacy of correspondence and telephone conversations). Only in this way will there be created a powerful democratic mechanism ruling out the monopolization by the bureaucracy of the vitally important issue of human rights.

Democracy imposed from above?

Igor Volgin

A compatriot of mine once remarked: "No matter what a person in Russia does, he is still to be pitied." Not a very happy remark.

But indeed, as Pyotr Chaadayev had noted back in the 19th century, bad luck seems to have dogged Russian history throughout the thousand years that it has existed. The most indisputable proof of our full statehood and might would suddenly turn over to lay bare the other side of the coin, revealing grievous, or more often tragic, features. What a strange and devastating paradox...

The young Rus accepted Christianity from the hands of enlightened Byzantium, only to find itself soon under the yoke of a brutal oriental despotism, "the spirit of which," Chaadayev, the author of the "Philosophical Letter" was to write,"was subsequently inherited by our national bodies of power."

The reforms of Peter the Great, that giant step taken in the 18th century and designed to bridge the dire gap that separated us from the rest of Europe, produced quick and tangible results, but at the same time also bred "overcentralization" – an administrative machine, cumbersome and inflexible. The present bureaucracy – perhaps unconsciously – still feels the effects of this genetic kinship.

The young officers who routed Napoleon, returned home brimming with liberal optimism and dreaming of a constitution, but instead Russia got executions and 30 years of stagnation.

Alexander II abolished serfdom giving the peasants their freedom, but executed those who wanted the reforms to go further. In return he met his death from a bomb.

Everyone in Russia "wants what's the best" for the country, but it turns out that he gets "what is worst."

The country was relentlessly moving towards catastrophe, which many believed would resolve all the problems accumulated over the ages. And indeed, the revolution resolved many of them at a single stroke.

The promise it held out was tremendous. It helped to lay in the foundation of the state the stone marked JUSTICE. What remained to be done seemed a small thing by comparison – to build a crystal palace on that foundation.

But Stalin built prison camps and army barracks.

The irony of history is that it takes a bitter revenge when words fail to coincide with deeds. There is nothing more insidious than an ideology that has been divorced from its essence. It then becomes a means for attaining success or, no less importantly, an indulgence, forgiving all sins. Words begin to act as drugs that put the brain to sleep and corrupt the soul: and when common sense falls asleep it breeds monsters.

"What we need," said Pierre Reverdy," is not so much freedom as that we should be ruled by those we love."

Igor Volgin, writer, historian and teacher, is the author of a number of works on 19th-century Russian literature, books of poems, and the novel, "Dostoyevsky's Last Year."

Stalin would never have been able to retain power in a country that had had a taste of freedom if he had not claimed to be acting in the name of freedom. The peasants would never have agreed to renounce their liberty – their right to do as they saw fit, to dispose of their property and their own lives, if at the bottom of their hearts the hope hadn't flicked that everything was being done for their own good – in the name of supreme, world interests.

Phraseology was made the supreme proof. It is not something derivative: it possesses a great force of its own. Words have a hypnotic effect if they sound just and appeal to men's better feelings.

Self-deception leads to a compromise with one's conscience and with its help the compromise is voluntary. But then only a step remains to a deal with the Devil.

The beginning was the word: but that does not mean that everything stops there.

The greatest danger for perestroika is if it is confined to **words.**

All the right words have already been said. They have done their job: cleared the air and got the nation's moral potential moving. That process, apparently, is irreversible. It would be incredible, impossible to imagine a situation in which society would be prepared to accept the old, completely devalued clichés. 19th-century Russian literary critic Vissarion Belinsky used to say that the reputation of a magazine was as hard to regain as the reputation of a woman: he had in mind the dignity of the word.

The public ear has adapted itself fully to **words.** Moreover, the bureaucrats who were initially scared stiff by them have now adapted too. They quickly realized that glasnost could be turned into a safety-valve. Those who were loudest of all in condemning "bourgeois freedoms" as an illusion, guessed surprisingly quickly that the level of openness achieved was a small price to pay to preserve real power. Let the public read the once-forbidden novels and see the shelved films, let the public argue till it is hoarse at exhibitions of non-conformist artists; one could even open the archives slightly. **They** could take that.

The hierarchy will not topple if the poet Fityushkin attacks it with his verses (such things happened under Brezhnev, and it was all right as long as no names were named).

Of course, even such verbal freedom is fraught with a certain danger: the truth, when spoken aloud is dangerous in itself. But that can't be helped; that, I repeat, is the price of fear. Glasnost made the bureaucracy take steps to look fitter and trimmer, a fitness that had been allowed to slide through the decades of complacency, satisfied appetites and quiet. Faced with the threat of social selection, the bureaucrat on top shook himself out of his slumber, realizing that only the social chameleons would survive.

And so, the most capable survive. The wise conservative will oust the stupid one.

I fully share the journalistic fervour of our press in the struggle against the phenomenon popularly known as "Nina Andreyeva" (after the author of a much-talked-of newspaper article). But if I had my way, I would have sung her praise because that article like litmus paper: it showed up the line-up of forces. It's true the opportunity was lost to give the Nina Andreyevas of both sexes the chance to state their views in

full. Where can one get a copy of the April issue of the magazine Molodaya Gvardia? It has disappeared without trace from libraries. Did it ever exist? How nice it would be to read aloud with all the proper feeling and pauses the views of this organ of the Komsomol Central Committee (if it really is the CC's organ!).

Bernard Shaw once remarked that the person you have to beware of is the one who does not return your blow.

Nina Andreyeva's attempt was stupid. Her supporters learned a valuable lesson from this failure. They will not repeat the same mistakes. They will not enter the lists with perestroika: naturally I mean the **verbal**lists.

They will try to undermine it from within.

I do not think that at the 19th Party Conference, which the whole country is awaiting with bated breath, the opponents of perestroika will come out openly against it. They are not bent on suicide and they hope to preserve their strength for future battles. They understand that now is the time to wait, that the main thing for them to do at present is to preserve their position at the helm.

The question of whose hands will power end up in is the decisive one.

In Russia all historic changes have begun from the top. Even the October Revolution, leaning on the discontent of the mases everywhere, was able to emerge victorious only after power passed into the hands of the Bolsheviks in the centre, in the capital, and then, like ripples on water, spread throughout the country. The revolution moved from the centre to the outlying regions, not the other way round.

Perestroika was proclaimed in Moscow. It was started on the initiative of the highest Party leadership, and to this day its sole guarantor remains the collective will of the Political Bureau.

In our conditions that is already quite a lot. But the subjective factor must be reinforced by the objective course of events. The 19th Party Conference has to devise a formula for transition.

A transition from verbally proclaimed goals to their immediate and concrete implementation.

Looking ahead into the future one can tell in advance what trumps the opponents of democracy will bring into play if perestroika falters. They will say that the public isn't used to democratic forms and procedures, point to the excesses resulting from this; they will cite the aggravation of national issues, the economic difficulties that are inevitable in the transition period, pricing and the highest trump of all – the charge that the country's defences could be weakened. All these factors will be listed with the appropriate degree of pain and preparedness to save the country from "slipping into anarchy".

To sugar the bitter pill, we might be offered perestroika without democracy. But that is tantamount to talking about the hereafter without believing in the immortality of the soul.

We might be offered a slightly renovated substitute for government by the people, but we are fed up with that kind of food.

The problem is that whether we like it or not, in a country that has no centuries-old traditions of democracy, democracy has to be introduced from above – and not always by entirely democratic means.

That is also a price that has to be paid – this time for lost opportunities.

If in the fifty years of the Supreme Soviet's existence, not a single deputy has ever voted against, this is a sign of a very sick society, not a monolithic one. This sickness paralyzes all social structures and institutions. That is why the initiative from above has not yet merged with the expected enthusiasm from the masses: mistrust of those in power is another of our national characteristics. Until we ourselves represent that power.

Our society has given birth to the perestroika process in great pain; it is a question of life or death now. But the majority are still waiting for proof that it is for real.

"Do you believe..." is a question put not only by people doing public opinion polls. It is a question lovers ask each other, relatives and friends.

So let me tell you: until glasnost is firmly bound to a normally functioning democratic mechanism, it will remain a flower in the buttonhole of the bureaucrat – poisonous and worthless, only serving to emphasize the bureaucrat's tolerance and good humour.

Recently a joke was published in the press. Democracy, it goes, is like a giraffe. He who has once seen it will not mistake it for anything else. However, some people find it to their advantage to "mistake," for example, a tiger for a giraffe. Moreover, they are doing their utmost to convince us that the beast of prey is a real giraffe.

We are told that variety undermines unity. What kind of unity?

Socialist pluralism presupposes many different voices. And not only in the press, but everywhere – in all levels of Party, public and government life. Polyphony is a sign of strength. Monologues, even the most inspiring, quickly tire the normal ear. Man needs dialogue.

The old "tired" bourgeois democracies can afford internal conflicts – between different forces, groups, interests and even between the executive and legislative bodies of power. And that, despite a high degree of social tension. Why then should a comparatively young socialist democracy (it's true it had to learn the bitter lessons of history the hard way) renounce what is inherent in its very spirit: diversity, ideological polyphonism, political initiative?

Yes, perestroika will be irreversible only when it moves from mere words to implementation. When the impulse sent from above evokes a giant wave in return. That will signify the beginning of an open and principled political struggle: it would be naive to think that we will be able to avoid such a struggle after decades of apolitical life and stormy applause.

But in that case the bureaucracy will have to lay all its cards on the table. It has displayed amazing adaptibility and fantastic tenacity, and has successfully blended with the perestroika process, and is now repeating the new slogans and pledges louder than anyone else. It is doing its utmost to take over the banner that would mean its inevitable death to inscribe it with its own emblems.

That must not be allowed to happen.

And as a preventive measure, the Party conference could discuss the formation of a moral headquarters and brains trust for perestroika. This body would have no administrative functions: it would remain exclusively a moral factor, perhaps a generator of ideas, an adviser and an expert. It could include persons of nationwide renown. Writers, scientists, journalists, politicians – people whose reputation as citizens stands high and who enjoy stable authority with the public.

The conscience of the nation is not an abstract concept: each could be named.

Not long ago the General Secretary suggested forming a "world consultative council uniting the intellectual elite of the world." Why shouldn't we make use of this excellent idea for our own internal needs?

But intellectual and cultural potential should serve the common cause. Culture does not safeguard one from mistakes, but greatly reduces the likelihood of their being made.

We are reconstructing not only the building that – for better or worse – we have built in the past seventy years. In a sense we are renovating the entire national structure. That is why it is useful to foresee the dangers, because, as the poet once said, "to tell how brave a man is, you have to know what he fears."

Insurance practice in Hungary

Vladimir Gerasimov

Because of the limited number of types of policy, getting insurance is a simple matter in the U.S.S.R. One can insure one's own life, the lives of one's dependents, and one's property. A citizen of Hungary, however, has to think hard before deciding what kind of insurance to take out...

For a long time the state insurance company Allami Biztosito (AB) had a monopoly on insurance in Hungary. Another company, Hungaria, opened in Budapest two years ago. Atlasz and Garancia have come into being only recently. Economists predict that the number of insurance companies will continue to grow. Savings banks will possibly obtain the right to render such services.

"Because of the monopoly on insurance, the income from insurance in our country makes up less than 0.5 per cent of the national income, whereas in developed capitalist countries income from insurance accounts for 3-5 per cent of the national income," said Andrea Deak, director-general of AB. She holds that the emergence of rival companies is a natural state of affairs.

"The servicing of the population has undoubtedly improved," said Tamas Uzony, head of Hungaria.

Having analyzed the new and extensive network of insurance companies being created, I realized how consistent the Hungarian government's measures to upgrade finance have been. The banking reform, the setting up of joint-stock companies, giving enterprises a freer hand in the use of assets and even the right to sell shops that operate at a loss, and the issuing of securities and bonds have accelerated the circulation of the forint. It was estimated that if the currency turnover in the country increased by 20-25 per cent, the resources to be allocated for development would double. And the restructuring of insurance is a considerable factor in improving the country's finances and invigorating the entire national economy.

The number of forms of insurance offered by insurance companies increases daily, indeed hourly.

For instance, water leaks from your apartment to an apartment in the floor below, a TV set explodes, a visitor falls and breaks his leg – all such mishaps and a host of other dangers such as burglary, theft, fire are covered by an insurance policy which specifies 24 different risks. There is an insurance policy called "Life path." It envisages life insurance at any age, even over 60, and its terms can be altered at any time. Even contributions can vary, and payments are made whenever convenient.

There is a policy under which the insurant decides on the size of his monthly contributions, on which the increment to his pension will depend. Part of the contribution is tax deductable. Enterprises can assume responsibility for the pensions of exemplary workers. AB has formed a special office in which unique life insurance policies can be taken out.

When it pays to run risks

"All these forms of insurance have been developed recently because of competition in the insurance market," Andrea Deak said. "Compensation for losses, for instance, is now made at once and in cash, if the sum is not large. Insurance agents are now available at offices on Saturdays and Sundays. Cooperatives and individual entrepreneurs can take out insurance policies not only on their property but also on a large part of their economic activity. This encourages them to act more boldly and take risks. There is a policy covering risks at assembly operations. There is a policy covering suspension of activity, and a policy for transport operations.

There is also a variety of policies in Hungary in the area of automobile insurance. When Hungaria was set up, AB rendered it support by turning over to it all kinds of automobile insurance – 800,000 policies, both compulsory and what are known as casco. Compulsory insurance is an old tradition. All privately-owned motor vehicles must be insured for the minimum amount. Damage resulting from a motorist's mistake is repaid on this

basis. If a motorist runs into another car, Hungaria picks up the bill for repairs. As distinct from compulsory insurance, casco insures a car owner against all other possible risks.

"We have imposed new conditions in order to increase the number of casco policies taken out. The car is not depreciated for five years after purchase. No-claim bonuses have been introduced. If a motorist doesn't have an accident over a twelve-month period, part of his money is refunded. If the damage resulting from an accident does not exceed 5,000 forints (about 150 rubles in real terms, taking into account prices and wages in Hungary) the insurance is paid immediately. If the damage is greater, the motorist will still be spared trouble as the insurance agents will make the necessary arrangements."

I was told this by Tamas Uzony at Hungaria. AB, too, has now won the right to issue casco insurance policies and offers various forms of such services. Another 110,000 motorists have taken out casco insurance policies. If your car is stolen or smashed in an accident, the insurance company will replace it with a new or used car of the same make, or else you can rent a car while your own car undergoes repairs. When the premium under the AB casco policy is paid for a

whole year in advance, the insurant is given a discount. AB will provide your car with a device to keep the windscreen clean in blizzards and rainy weather. All this attracts customers, just as, for instance, does the adjustment of headlights free of charge.

Garancia guarantees...

Insurance policies taken out by industrial plants are marked by the spirit of enterprise. Guarantees against economic loss have already been mentioned. AB offers policies of 28 kinds to agricultural cooperatives. (This service is provided for nearly 90 per cent of all agricultural cooperatives.) Agreements are concluded taking into account local conditions and the specific characteristics of the client's job and income. The new company, Garancia, insures loans. An enterprise, a cooperative, or an individual entrepreneur might have borrowed money. What if this proves not to be enough? Where can new credits be obtained? Or is one heading for bankruptcy? The company guarantees that neither the situation of the creditors nor that of the borrower will be adversely affected.

Absolutely new opportunities are offered by the right to independent investment and business activity.

"In the past we kept all the funds in a bank," Andrea Deak said, explaining the way in which new business is operated. "Only 60 per cent of our funds are now lodged with the bank. The remaining sum is used in the pursuit of new profits in any area, except for crediting. But as we put the money of our clients into circulation, we must insure ourselves against bankruptcy or failure."

Guided by these rules of the game, AB, for instance, invests in shares (dividends from the one billion forints allocated for the purchase of securities last year came to ten per cent of the investment) or else becomes a shareholder in various companies. A hotel was bought and leased in Pesc. Investments will be made in the development of foreign tourism and in innovative firms which identify, introduce and circulate new gadgets and products.

Property guard

This office owned by AB displays electronic instruments and simple locks, signal devices for entrances, miniature monitors, fire-prevention equipment and devices against car thefts.

"Equipment and systems displayed can protect your property against 22 types of risk," said the director of the office Tibor Czegle. "There are gadgets that we test and then issue recommendations on their use."

Andrea Deak: "Competition in insurance business is only natural."

The office has existed since January, but it has already established contacts with 45 plants and cooperatives. It tests and exhibits new gadgets that they offer, and then puts them in touch with customers, thus acting as a promoter.

"But when a new article is presented by an individual, we act as innovators," the director said. "We examine the product, and,if necessary, find first a designer, then a manufacturer and then deal with marketing. This will bring us a certain percentage of the profits."

Those who have the alarm systems installed by the firm Property Guard are eligible for various benefits in taking out insurance policies. These are either a 30-per cent discount or a 50-per cent increase in the policy's ceiling. So this is profitable for both sides.

I also learned about one more aspect of insurance companies' activities. I first became aware of it when I visited the village of Bakonykuti. As you enter it there is a board on which it is written "non-smoking community." It all started when the firm Hungaria announced that a prise would be paid to residents of villages and settlements that gave up smoking. The rate of payments depending on the size of the population has been established. The upper limit is one million forints. Nearly 30 villages and settlements entered the competition. Hungaria also announced a 10-per cent discount rate for life insurance to those who take part. The money allocated was spent on providing various services and amenities.

In its turn, AB announced a competition for research projects into methods of combating smoking. Some 100 papers have been sent in. A special commission decreed that a million forints be allocated for the further financing of some of the projects.

"There is a school which we have provided for and which we supply with funds for training in firefighting," Andrea Deak said, citing further examples of the company's activities. "Most pupils go on to become firemen. Funds are being provided for medical research, for the upkeep of physicians' retraining courses, and measures are being developed for combating drunkenness and drug abuse. We sponsor sports competitions. We have now insured Hungary's Olympic team and have contributed to a fund to reward prizewinners."

Those who are engaged in insurance in Hungary have set themselves the task of anticipating the demands and requirements of customers and making the biggest possible contribution to the development of the national economy.

BUDAPEST

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Highways and byways

Leonid Milovanov

A foreigner arriving in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is required to pass a test to make his driving licence valid in that country. Licences issued in other countries cut no ice there.

A mountain road

I called at the highway police headquarters in Hanoi six weeks after my arrival. I could not bring myself to go along there earlier, for though I was an experienced driver, my driving had largely been confined to Moscow.

I was asked to write a paper on theory, and after that they started asking more practical questions. How do you negotiate a crossroads? I thought I had stuck to the rules all the way, but something must have gone wrong...

"You've made a mistake," a smiling lieutenant told me. "Can't you see what's wrong?" I was clearly puzzled and the lieutenant proceeded to explain to me that I should have given that cyclist and this ox-cart right of way. He also told me that cyclists and carts always have right of way.

"Can't you give me another try? I promise to give everyone right of way, before I even touch the accelerator."

The smiling lieutenant was unimpressed by my attempt to humour him and said that I must now take a driving test. "Please, don't take me anywhere near Dong Xuan Street," I implored.

My plea did not impress the officer either. Dong Xuan Street was exactly where he took me. My biggish Volga was immediately lost in a maze of byways lined with shops. The Vietnamese highway inspectors never lost their composure as with every turn I became increasingly convinced that I am the only one for whom driving rules exist. There was total havoc all around us. I made a poker face and gave right of way to every trundling truck, every ox-cart, and every cyclist. The officers who gave me the test finally took pity on me, obviously appreciating the difficulty of driving a Volga in the area of Dong Xuan Street. They told me to turn back.

At the headquarters they treated me to a cup of excellent tea and congratulated me on having passed the incredibly difficult test. I was given the papers which equated me in my driving rights with native-born motorists. They let me go and I was now free to take evasive action each time a container truck cut across my path. During my years of driving in Vietnam I had to foresee the endless holes in the road in pitch dark, try not to smash my car at ferry transfers, and contrive to see to it that the rate at which my car bumped against the rickety flooring of bridges over thousands of streams did not coincide with the rate at which the bridges oscillated. The only right my driving licence entitled me to, it seems, was to think carefully about the consequences before accelerating. My duties were many, quite enough to land any of our own easy-going motorists in hospital with a coronary.

Elephant traps and chicken traps

Now, six years later, I have covered 400,000 kilometres along Vietnam's highways and byways. I think back to the roads I have left behind with a touch of

nostalgia. They gave me a chance to acquire an intimate knowledge of the country, its people and their concerns, and get an idea of what at first seemed a hopeless transport problem.

The Vietnamese do not know the famous dictum of Ilf and Petrov's hero Ostap Bender to the effect that a car is not a luxury, but merely a vehicle but I'm sure they can subscribe to it. Transport was vital to them throughout the long years of their fight for national dignity and independence, which they began with nothing but bicycles to carry military cargoes. I do not know how they managed to take thousands of tons of materiel to Hoa Binh as part of the strategic operation to rout French colonialists or to Dien Bien Phu, the battle for which put paid to the French colonialist presence in Indo-China. They used bicycles and carts, and history shows that they managed. Vietnamese drivers performed incredible feats as they took their trucks to their destinations under continuous U.S. aerial bombardment and shelling from the sea. They showed immense courage during the bitter years of the war and the traces of that war are still in evidence on Vietnam's highways.

Foreign tourists who are driven in coaches along the highway between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City become aware of the road problem in Vietnam. The approach that Vietnamese and Soviet civil engineers take to resolve the problem is comprehensive: road maintenance, the use of vehicles and their servicing, and the supply of spare parts. Trucks carry the bulk of freight traffic and play a very important part in the country's economy. High class highways are confined to central and southern Vietnam; in other parts of the country the surface of highways is rather like a washboard. It bears the traces of tanks and armoured personnel carriers and in many places there are still craters left by bombing (barely filled with earth, they are called elephant traps in Vietnam) and huge craters left by exploded mines (these are called chicken traps). Typhoons and pouring rains mess up a lot of unpaved roads every year. It takes three hours to drive from Hanoi to Haiphong and, considering the road situation in the country, this is not surprising. That highway is also the most important link between the port of Haiphong and the northern provinces and is perhaps the best in the northern part of the republic.

The situation is changing, although not as fast as one would wish. In the early 1980s Dong Si Nguyen assumed the post of Minister of Communications and Transport. He is now a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Vietnam. He was the commander of the famous Ho Chi Minh Trail in the 1960s and 1970s. The trail linked north and south and crossed the jungles and mountains of Vietnam and Laos. It was the vital supply line for the liberation forces in the south. Having assumed his post, the new minister began by restoring the roads, and the results of his hard work are very much in evidence today.

The Soviet Union and Vietnam cooperated on a project to build a bridge over the Red River in Hanoi. The Thang Long bridge replaced the old Long Bien bridge, which was built at the turn of the century to a design by the great Gustave Eiffel. The old bridge, in effect the only link between the northern provinces and other parts of the country, could no longer handle the heavy traffic and locally acquired the nickname of the "horizontal Eiffel Tower." It was holding back the economic development of the republic. The new bridge removed the bottleneck at Hanoi and increased the speed of the traffic. The old bridge now handles bicycle traffic. The Communications and Transport Ministry was not satisfied, however. Another bridge across the Red River was commissioned in the summer of 1985, a kilometre down the river from the Long Bien bridge, by bridge builders who had amassed experience at the Thang Long bridge construction site.

The bridge-building Thang Long administration was instrumental in starting other bridge-building projects, one of the most important being the bridge on the highway from Hanoi to Hoa Binh.

I recall my first trip to Da Nang from Hanoi in January 1981. A 150-km stretch from Ha Tinh to the Ben Hai River would have given us all a bumpy time if the drivers of Soviet-made UAZ cross-country four-wheel drive cars or PAZ buses had decided to steer their vehicles at, say 50 km an hour. The safe speed limit was 30 km an hour. I counted 41 broken-down bridges on a 37-km stretch. The highway has been rebuilt now. At the start of 1986 I drove down it in a Niva, doing 60 km an hour on the average.

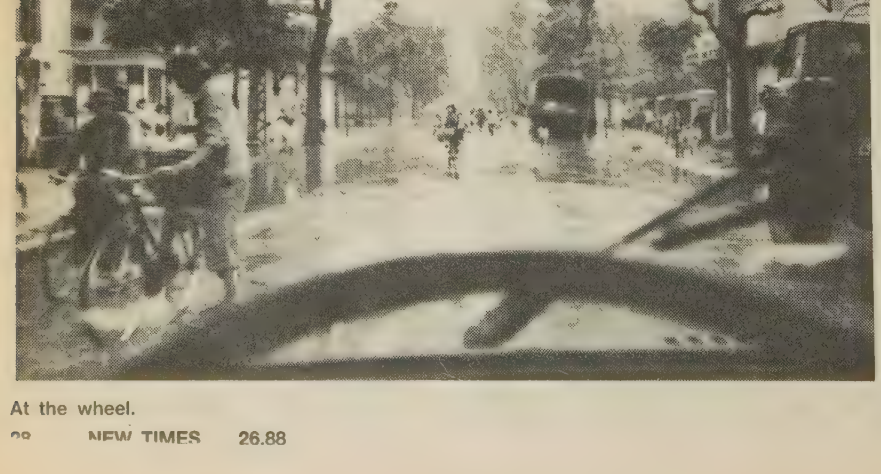
An end must be put to the lack of roads at any cost. The leaders of the country are well aware that good highways save vehicles as well as fuel and lubricants, which are in short supply.

Autoservice and AutoVAZ

Changing tyres is no problem now anywhere in the country. Tyre services are available in practically every community and recognizable by an old tyre hung on a pole outside a bamboo hut housing a workshop. That is the kind of service I fondly recallec as I travelled down Soviet highways. Ir Vietnam the service is in the hands of family cooperatives. They take no more than 20 minutes to do the job while you are enjoying a cup of stiff, rather bitter tea at a near-by tea-house.

Other cooperatives offer services in fixing the undercarriages of ordinary and cross-country vehicles and trucks.

If you are travelling by car alone you may run into trouble, though. Luckily for the highway police, there are few lone motorists, most of them are foreigners stationed in Vietnam and they always carry a stock of spares with them. Truck and bus drivers find the going much harder. The number of cars in Vietnam is growing, bu the maintenance and repair services availa



At the wheel.

le are yet not what they ought to be. hose who have to drive every day prefer turdy cars capable of surviving consid- rable mileage before they break down.

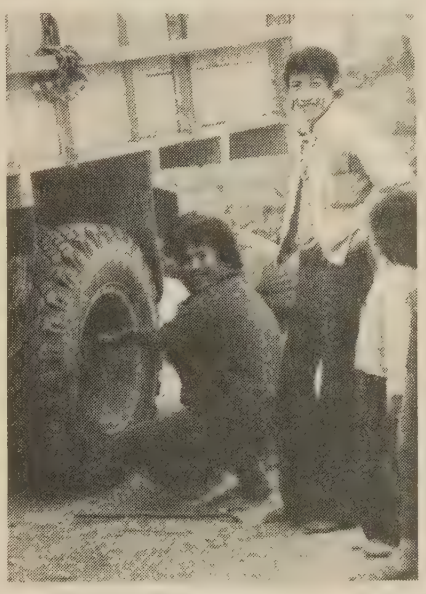
Of Soviet makes, the ZIL-130 truck is y far the favourite with Vietnamese driv- rs. It is reliable and relatively easy to op- rate. There are also BelAZ, KrAZ and AZ trucks plying Vietnam's highways nd I must say bluntly that the BelAZ uck did not acquit itself well at first, and oviet technical experts working on the onstruction of a hydropower station in oa Binh can bear witness to this. The ietnamese found the truck too difficult handle. Those who dared use it were ven issued additional food rations by onstruction site administration, but it is the credit of Vietnamese transport orkers that they finally managed to learn handle the trucks. The sole Soviet- ade buses here is PAZ, and they are ing a good job. Twelve hundred ometres from Hanoi I met with a group Soviet artistes on a tour of the country. ey were driving to Ho Chi Minh City in AZ buses. The trip had exhausted them much that they had to take a day off er they arrived. The bus is not de- ned for the hot climate of Vietnam and ns into an oven under the scorching un. The same goes for our trucks, which vel in their own private heat wave, hich you can feel several metres away. ese vehicles are not very comfortable r the driver and passengers, and some their units have not been modified to it the local climate.

I would dearly love to see the designers the UAZ four-wheel drive car after a ive from Hanoi to Da Nang. The car is doubt a very sturdy one, but it is not omfortable even on our roads, let alone the highways of Vietnam. But, still, the r is popular in Vietnam for its reliability nd longevity. There is a growing number Toyotas with a cross-country capabil- and Vietnamese drivers praise these rs highly. The Japanese cars can use esel. They are comfortable and fitted th air-conditioners which are vital in the t, humid climate of Vietnam. It is quite ong to think that the Vietnamese do not ffer from the heat. They have simply arnt to live with it.

There is a growing number of Soviet- ade Volgas, Ladas, and Nivas in the untry. Volgas made at the Gorky Auto ant are doing well and are fairly reliable, t this is not true of the Ladas and Nivas ade at the VAZ plant. I was told of some them breaking down before they had vered 25,000 km. A Lada is likely to fail art soon after this guaranteed run, and ere is a shortage of mechanics. You very often have to turn to representatives of the AutoVAZ plant in Vietnam. In their off hours they will help you keep a car of their make running, but they are few and far between; there is enough work for a whole outfit of them here, and if the AutoVAZ plant sets up an office in Vietnam they won't have any time to kill.

A litre of petrol for two kilos of rice

Soviet trucks produced by the Gorky and ZIL autoplants in the late 1940s and early 1950s can still be seen on Vietnam's highways. Vietnamese drivers say they are still doing well. The cars of previous



They'll fix your car here

generations were rougher but more reliable, and did not require sophisticated repairs. These machines have survived a thirty-year war and a severe shortage of roads, and are still serviceable. Spares can be manufactured locally, which gives them an advantage over more modern cars whose spare parts have to be imported. Modern cars need high-standard servicing to survive in Vietnam. An agreement was signed by the governments of the Soviet Union and Vietnam in 1977 on cooperation in improving the standards of the servicing of Soviet cars, equipment and instruments in Vietnam. A total of 122 stations for the maintenance of trucks, cars, and earth-moving and farm machinery were built. Between 1980 and 1985 the Soviet side honoured the obligations it assumed and these stations now function in many provinces. The trouble is, however, that these stations, fitted out with all the necessary equipment and supplied with sufficient spares, are not quite as efficient as they might be. Standards of local personnel training do not measure up to the required skills. In a country where a debate about the merits of an ox versus a tractor still makes sense, it takes time before people, accustomed to traditional farming practices, realize that technology can operate for a long time without failure. It also takes time to start and run training centres where mechanics can be taught.

AutoVAZ experts travel all over the country and have to combine teaching with maintaining equipment that has broken down due to inexpert use. But AutoVAZ is the sole Soviet auto-manufacturer represented in Vietnam. Our friends in Vietnam are hoping that the training of local cadres will improve once a Soviet technological centre has been set up in Hanoi. The centre is expected to start a course that will offer several months of training and experience in use and servicing all Soviet-made equipment exported to Vietnam.

The first group of future car mechanics, assemblymen and fitters is already being trained at the bus plant in Likino in this country. Those who are getting their training now will go back home and train local labour for the transport industry. By 1990 Vietnam is expected to have started extracting its own oil, and there is hope that the fuel problem will be less acute. At the moment the bartering value of one litre of petrol is two kilos of rice, which is the staple food in Vietnam.

The problems in manufacturing tyres and spares are being gradually sorted out. Last year the Hanoi tyre factory produced 30,000 sets of tyres, which is a good start. Restrictions on the ownership of private cars have been lifted and the use of such cars is now regarded as a cooperative or individual enterprise.

I left Vietnam hoping that next time I come I will find the driving safer. I will look forward to taking to the beautiful, albeit, difficult highways and byways of Vietnam again very much.

HANOI – HO CHI MINH CITY – MOSCOW

Photos by the author

■

Scope for doing good

The Primate of Poland as a guest of the Russian Orthodox Church

The Roman Catholic Primate of Poland, Cardinal Josef Glemp, is among guests of honour attending the celebrations here of the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus. The Embassy of the Polish People's Republic in Moscow assisted our correspondent Vladimir Galin in meeting and interviewing him.

Your Eminence, what is the attitude of Catholics in Poland to the jubilee of the Russian Orthodox Church?

I can say that the celebration of the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus, and the attention given in your country to the church, evoked great sympathies in Poland. I am sure that the same feelings were experienced by people in many other countries. The church in the Soviet Union now offers a most striking example of how perestroika really proceeds.

There have been different periods in the history of relations between the Russian Orthodox and the Polish Catholic Churches. What are these relations today?

Indeed, there have been different periods in the relations between our churches over the centuries. Both churches were firmly linked to the state in the past, and government policy in this connection wittingly or unwittingly influenced the church and involved it in its own affairs. Therefore, when the relations between the states were not good, the churches had to follow suit. I must note, however, that truly religious people realized that the cause of the church is above politics, outside politics, and therefore realized and appreciated the good things done by both churches.

We now see the possibility of cooperation in cultural affairs, religious affairs, and the protection of human rights.

What is your attitude to the separation of the church from the state?

The church now holds a different place in society and the state than it did previously. The separation of the church from the state is now proclaimed in almost all the constitutions of the world. And this is a very positive development. True, this principle is not implemented in equal measure everywhere. In some countries there is a considerable dependence of the church on the state, whereas in other countries the church is quite independent of the state. As for Poland, this separation has gone rather far, and I believe that this attitude is good from the point of view of both sides. We view this separation as freedom for the church, an opportunity to discharge its functions unhampered and protect itself againt becoming an instrument of any political camp.

Poland is now living through difficult times. To judge from letters to our editorial office from readers, Western radio stations are broadcasting contradictory reports about the stand taken by the Catholic Church in these difficult days for the Polish people. Could you tell us about the place and role ofthe Catholic Church in overcoming the crisis in the country?

The crisis in Poland is fairly acute and has lasted for a considerable period of time. It is affecting the economic, social and political spheres. To my mind, some benefits should ultimately emerge from this acute crisis. For people will find in it a truth that will promote the development of the social organism. We should learn from the crisis how to make compromises, how to retreat. Sometimes one should even abandon one's opinion to find the objective truth. Therefore, a very difficult role has fallen to the lot of the Catholic Church in Poland now. For the church should meet the requirements of all believers, and believers often have opposing political views. Therefore, our stand is the stand of easing acute conflicts, of reconciliation and relief to the poor.

People are changing, becoming different from what they were ten years ago, a hundred years ago...

The church has always observed man in all his manifestations. But just as in daily life, some things alter, while others remain unchanged. We are witnessing the huge development of technology. People are now surrounded by radio and television, and live in conditions of rapid and convenient communications. But all this technological abundance and all these novelties cannot change man in his attitude to conscience, to good and evil... We would like moral values common to all of humanity to be preserved even in the new technological conditions.

Soviet people are closely following the events in Poland, and the Polish people probably follow what takes place in our country. What is your opinion of the new thinking in the Soviet Union's foreign policy, and of perestroika and openness?

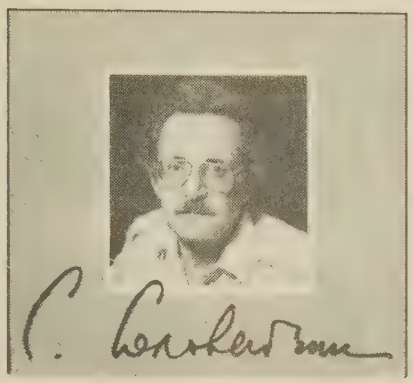
Though we are quite removed from political matters, particularly, foreign policy, we are aware of the Soviet Union's great efforts aimed at bringing peoples closer together. The two superpowers – the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. – now play the main role in the world. Other countries should relate somehow to these two superpowers. In this connection we view the summit contacts between your country and the United States as good for all of humanity, for there is today no way other than dialogue to resolve complex international problems. We note vast changes in the U.S.S.R. and the scale of the celebrations of the Millennium of Christianity in Russia is an obvious and good example of these changes. I think they will continue as they are greatly needed. It should be ensured that every church participate in what does good to people, and join in everything that offers a prospect for the development of real, not fictitious, values.

The Soviet principles of renewal are very bold, I must admit.

And, Your Eminence, one last question. Is the threat of a holocaust a real one? What can be done by the church to prevent it?

A universal catastrophe is certainly possible. But with the present level of awareness, I think matters will not go that far. The church has been telling people from time immemorial that conscience, the attitude of one human to another, is above many other values. "Love thy neighbour" is one of the highest commandments. If this law is faithfully applied, it will provide a real basis for world peace. And proceeding from this, preaching this, we contribute to human consciousness, to the human cause of protecting humanity from self-destruction.

The junior world



Delegate Shatalov

I couldn't believe my ears. There was reason to rejoice, but I was overcome with surprise. Anything can be expected nowadays, but this beats everything.

On Sunday Soviet television announced that Victor Shatalov, a teacher of mathematics in Donetsk, had been elected a delegate to the 19th Party conference. I think this is a supreme recognition of his contribution to perestroika.

So Shatalov has achieved recognition. Shatalov has been elected a delegate to the conference. Have new times really set in in our country?

I have been writing about Shatalov since 1972 and I probably know better than many others what he has had to endure. Even though the most outstanding teacher in the U.S.S.R., Mikhail Skatkin, and the eminent specialist in educational psychology, Vasily Davydov, have recognized Shatalov's system, bureaucrats among scientists and in the Ministry have been exerting themselves to keep him down. "Cut off their oxygen supply," is what one school administrator suggested to do with regard to educational innovations. This phrase reverberated through teaching staffs throughout the country. The idea of a bureaucrat as a person with a bulging brief case or a stack of papers is not necessarily correct. A latter-day bureaucrat, particularly when acting on instructions from above, is someone who cuts off the oxygen supply, the slanderer and sneak who stages vicious provocations. Efforts have been made to ruin Shatalov by means of bogus committees. He was dismissed, proclaimed politically suspect (reason: he answered pupils' questions about the award of the Order of Victory to Leonid Brezhnev), and was even said to be mentally disturbed. To this day, publications in the educational sphere regularly carry abusive and slanderous articles about Shatalov. Many teachers influenced by this propaganda have adopted a cautious attitude to Shatalov. But thousands of teachers travel at their own expense to attend his classes. His three books brought out by the Pedagogika Publishers sold out in no time, and Shatalov's televized hour-and-a-half-long appearance in the Ostankino studio made him the most popular teacher in the Soviet Union.

The so-called standard teaching practice that replaced individualized instruction at home or in the classroom gained broad currency the world over some two hundred years ago. The advantage of the standard method which accounts for its speedy and sweeping victory is that it is incredibly economical as compared with individualized instruction. And the method's failing, which, no matter how one tries, cannot be overcome, is that a teacher has no opportunity to take into consideration the abilities and characteristics of the individual child. "Don't stifle a Mozart." This call is made in every language, but nobody knows how many talented individuals have been smothered, how many talents have not been expanded, and how many intellects in a class of 40, or even of only 20, have remained uncultivated. And how many teenagers had lost confidence in themselves by the time they left school.

When you hear once again the statement that every pupil should be reached or something of the kind, don't you believe it. It is all idle talk. The problem cannot be solved by conventional methods, and neither the teacher's talent, nor his diligence matter. What is needed is a discovery. And Shatalov has made such a discovery. This is why the administrative pedagogic system is up in arms against him. A discovery is the most scathing comment on the state of things. Discoveries blast the careers of others.

Indeed, Shatalov has resolved a problem of world importance. He has realized the obvious: that knowledge can exist in two forms: extended (in speech or in a book) and concentrated (in the mind). By means of reference signals invented by Shatalov (a poster with the gist of a report, i.e., knowledge in concentrated form) the teacher comprehensively checks the progress of every pupil at every lesson, and this takes him a mere 10 or 15 minutes. This means that every child is given individualized tuition in a general school. The atmosphere in the classroom changes dramatically. Everybody is engaged in mental work all the time and everybody is eager to learn. The entire system of teaching refurbished by Shatalov decisively encourages the pupil to carry out each assignment with interest. Faced with a set of a hundred problems, the pupil chooses those he or she can cope with. And the pupil can take as much time – a day, a month or six months – as necessary to work them out. In other words, each pupil studies at his own pace and his own level, and the teacher makes no distinction between children according to their academic progress, does not grade them, or reward the most talented ones in any way. The reward for a problem solved is a new problem. And the main thing is that all these methods add up to previously unknown way of developing children's thinking which is equally effective with fast and slow learners. Shatalov's watchword "studies must be successful" is effectively applied by his followers.

And just imagine what it can do for a child, believed to be slow on the uptake, when he or she suddenly becomes an excellent pupil. The academic record of the class to which Shatalov teaches mathematics consists of 15 hundred excellent marks. Everyone is an excellent pupil. I have witnessed this myself.

Boundless fame is in store for Shatalov. The world is yet to discover him. His election as a delegate to the Party conference, which was announced on TV on Sunday, is only a milestone.

The only thing that remains to be wished is that he achieve this fame in his lifetime, and not after his death, as has too often happened of late. May I venture a quotation from my own play "A melancholy lover": "We've had enough posthumous glory, which is truly a disgrace to mankind." ■

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